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A HISTORY OF
FRENCH ARCHITECTURE
FROM 1661 TO 1774

A HISTORY OF FRENCH ARCHITECTURE

FROM THE DEATH OF MAZARIN TILL THE DEATH OF LOUIS XV 1661-1774

BY

SIR REGINALD BLOMFIELD

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HON. FELLOW OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD: OFFICIER DE L'ORDRE DE LA COURONNE, AND OFFICIER DE L'ORDRE DE LEOPOLD II OF BELGIUM: OFFICIER DE L'INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE, AND HON. CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE SOCIÉTÉ DES ARCHITECTS DIPLÔMÉS DE FRANCE. AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF FRENCH ARCHITECTURE, 1496-1661"

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Page 26, Chapter heading, *for* "AUDRY" *read* "AUBRY."

Page 132, note 1 *should read* "Quousque tandem abutēris, Catilina, patientia nostra."

Page 135, note 3, line 2, *for* "Surintendant des Bâtiments" *read* "Directeur-Général des Bâtiments."

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STATUE OF JOAN OF ARC, ROUEN (1752)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

A History of French Architecture
1661—1774

CHAPTER XVI

The Architecture of the Reign of Louis XIV

THE history of architecture has suffered from the insatiable instinct for classification. A writer collects a few facts and dates, and instead of treating them as material for a working hypothesis, builds up his history in a series of compartments, which are ultimately put forward as an actual and authentic sequence in fact. Thus, in the old days of the Gothic revival, we were taught to discriminate between Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular, and the writers of our guide-books still disfigure their pages and mislead their readers with E.E., Dec., and Perp. History is not so easy, nor is it so accommodating to the man with a passion for system. Things happen simultaneously as well as one after the other, and a habit of design that may have become obsolete in one place may linger on in another for a hundred years or more. It is impossible to assign a specific date to the beginning and end of any vital development of architecture, where movements go far back into the past and reach far forward into the future, and the ordinary text-book classification by styles and periods, limited to definite terms of years, have little value in that they have to exclude large quantities of relevant facts. When, therefore, one speaks of the architecture of Louis Quatorze, Louis Quinze or Louis Seize, it is necessary to define more closely what one means. The period from the death of Mazarin to the death of Louis XIV (1661-1715) represents the actual effective period of his reign; yet during those fifty-four years three distinct phases appear in the development of architecture, and it

is only the central phase of the three that can be classified specifically as the architecture of Louis XIV.

In 1661 Louis XIV was young, inexperienced, and ignorant, burning with ambition to make his mark in the world, but uncertain how to do it. Fortunately for himself and France, he fell into the hands of a statesman of unrivalled genius for organization, and Colbert, whose real object was to re-establish France on a basis of settled order and prosperity, diverted the King's craving for honour and glory into the patronage and encouragement of the arts. Colbert became Surintendant des Bâtiments in 1664, and the reorganization of the arts of France was one of his especial cares for the remainder of his life. He found in the King's passion for building a ready means of stimulating the arts, and in the building and decoration of the new Royal houses abundant scope for architecture, sculpture, and painting, and in their furnishing and equipment for all the crafts and industries. The first thing to do was to find an architect. François Mansart was still alive, but he was an old man and too independent to suit the methods of Colbert, the man of "bon sens moyen,"[1] who regarded the arts as part of the State machinery, and would not have hesitated to throw overboard the greatest artist that ever lived if he interfered with the smooth working of the machine. In the second rank, but in high employment, was Louis Le Vau, and for a time Le Vau represented official architecture. But Le Vau was a dull man; his design was old-fashioned, and he had already been passed over when he died in 1670. He therefore cannot be taken as typical of the architecture of Louis XIV. François Blondel was a civil servant, a savant and a mathematician quite as much as an architect, and though he was professor of architecture, and designed triumphal arches and certain engineering works, he does not seem to have been seriously regarded as an architect, at any rate for the purpose of the Royal palaces. Meanwhile, the rebuilding of the Louvre was already in hand, with Claude Perrault in control, and more or less supreme in architecture for some ten years, but Perrault also, in spite of his genius, was never really accepted by the French architects. He had not been trained as an architect, and they suspected his technical knowledge and skill—in my opinion quite unfairly. The force of professional opinion was too strong for him. He also went completely out of favour as an architect, and his "Peristyle" of the Louvre remained an isolated achievement of splendid brilliancy. Perrault had no following, and was not

[1] M. Lemonnier.

even allowed to complete his great design for the Arc de Triomphe in the Faubourg S. Antoine. The only traces of Perrault's influence that I can discover are the oval plaques that were hung between the columns in the Place des Victoires. The Louvre was deserted. Versailles had already defeated Colbert's schemes for the reconstitution of Paris. Louis XIV had got his way, and had made it quite clear to Colbert that he meant to keep it. A new type of man must be found to carry out the King's caprices, an architect supple, clever, and adroit, burdened by no scruples or convictions, perfectly plastic in the hands of the King, or rather of his Minister. Antoine Le Pautre was evidently considered, but though a better artist than his rival, he seems to have been a man of rather awkward temper and lacking in finesse. Colbert found his man in Jules Hardouin Mansart, a young architect scarcely thirty years of age, distantly connected with the greatest of French architects, but, so far as one can ascertain, possessed of no particular qualifications but that of a pleasant address, complete absence of scruples, and an extraordinary faculty for getting on. Jules Hardouin Mansart was entrusted with Clagny in 1675 and with Versailles in 1676. He was thrust into the Academy of Architecture, and from this time forward, almost to the day of his death, in 1708, his supremacy was never seriously challenged. The disastrous state of the finances, however, due to the political blunders of Louis XIV, made extensive building operations impossible after 1690. After that date existing undertakings were carried on but slowly and with great difficulty. Moreover, the King, under the influence of Mdme. de Maintenon, had become extremely devout, he had lost his interest in building, and no longer squandered the resources of the State on palaces for his various mistresses. The fifteen years from 1675 to 1690 represent the great building period of the reign of Louis XIV, and the works designed by J. H. Mansart, or attributed to his design, are the typical expression of the architecture of Louis XIV. The work done before the rise of Mansart, excepting that of Perrault and of the elder Blondel, who stand by themselves, belong to the earlier regime; the work done in the later years of the reign belong to the new school of Bullet, of Gabriel II,[1] De Cotte, L'Assurance, and Le Blond, that became paramount in the early years of the eighteenth century.

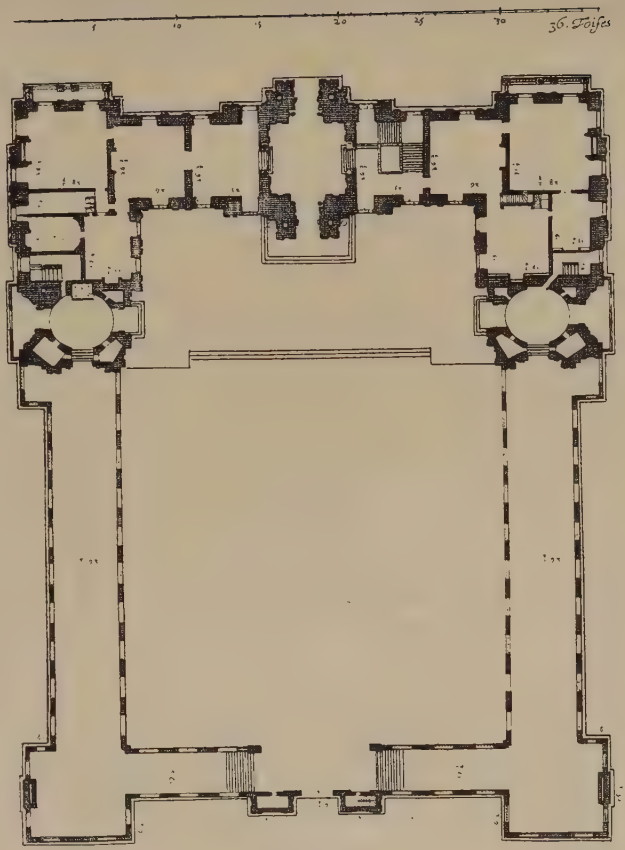
Taking J. H. Mansart's work, then, as typical, one has to inquire what was his positive contribution to French architecture. Did he improve on the work of his predecessors, in plan, elevation and detail?

[1] Intendant et Contrôleur des Bâtimens du Roy.

Did he really develop the art and carry it beyond the point at which it was left by François Mansart? No man ever had such an opportunity for doing so, unless it was Wren, and Wren did, in fact, succeed in creating out of the work of his predecessors the most beautiful and characteristically national type of architecture that has existed in this country since the fifteenth century. Mansart appears to me to have failed to do anything of the sort, but on the other hand he so exhausted the building resources of the country that his successors found little left for them to do, and had perforce to occupy themselves with the invention of successive modes in decoration and the cultivation of the fashionable amateur. When Le Vau died in 1670 the typical plan of the country house was pretty well established, and it had, in fact, made no very great advance since the days of De Brosse and the Luxembourg. Except for a notable difference in the advanced pavilions of the forecourt, the block plan[1] of Maisons follows the block plan of the Luxembourg or Palais d'Orléans. An enclosed forecourt with buildings on all three sides led up to a low raised platform in front of the principal building. This consisted of a central and two end pavilions connected by buildings set back between them; the entrance was in the centre, and from the end pavilions wings ran out enclosing two sides of the forecourt. The only important difference from De Brosse was that Mansart and Le Vau kept the buildings low on the two sides of the forecourt,[2] and usually kept the outer or entrance side free of buildings altogether, enclosing it with a low wall or iron rails and important iron gates, flanked by advanced pavilions at the outer angles. Rincy and Vaux le Vicomte were characteristic examples. In both cases the main block of buildings was divided by the central entrance pavilion into two symmetrical halves. In the time of De Brosse and even of De L'Orme, it had been usual to place the principal staircase in this centre pavilion, and it occupied this position in the great house designed by Le Mercier at Richelieu. Mansart and Le Vau abandoned this practice; at Maisons the very beautiful staircase is to the right of the entrance; at Vaux le Vicomte it is on the left and relatively unimportant. As the principal

[1] These remarks apply only to the block plan. There are all sorts of differences in detail.

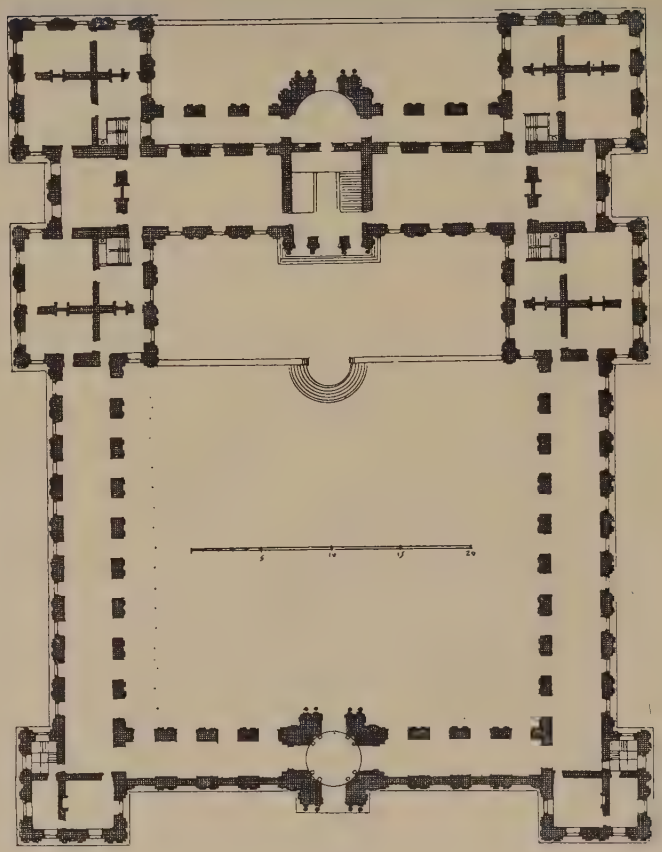
[2] At Turny in Burgundy, probably an early work of Le Vau, the two sides of the forecourt are occupied by ranges of two-storey buildings terminated by pavilions; that on the right containing a circular chapel, that on the left a "Grande Chambre de Parade"; the space between was left open, and the entrance into the forecourt was by a bridge across the moat, flanked by two bastions. The original design of Vaux repeated this treatment.



GROUND PLAN

MAISONS. F. MANSART (p. 4)

(PETIT MAROT)

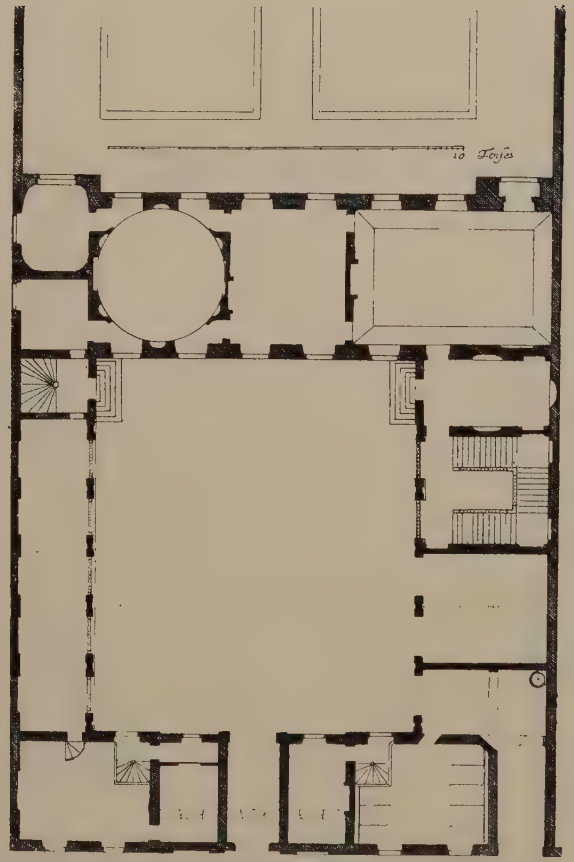


GROUND PLAN

PALAIS D'ORLÉANS (LUXEMBOURG). S. DE BROSSE (p. 4)

(PETIT MAROT)

[Pl. TO FACE P. 4



GROUND PLAN

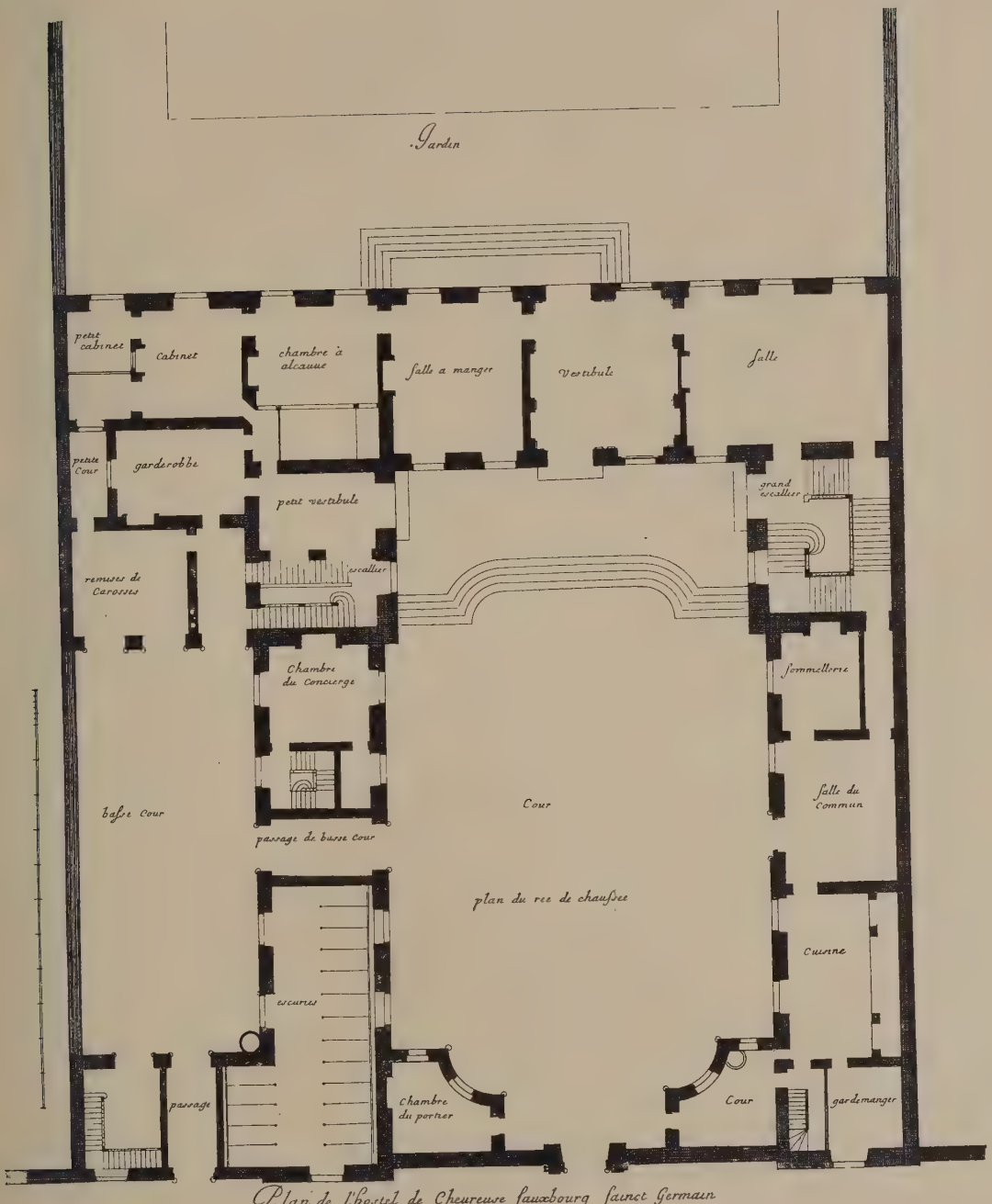
HÔTEL D'ARGOUGE (MUSÉE CARNAVALET). F. MANSART (see p. 6)

(PETIT MAROT)

GROUND PLAN

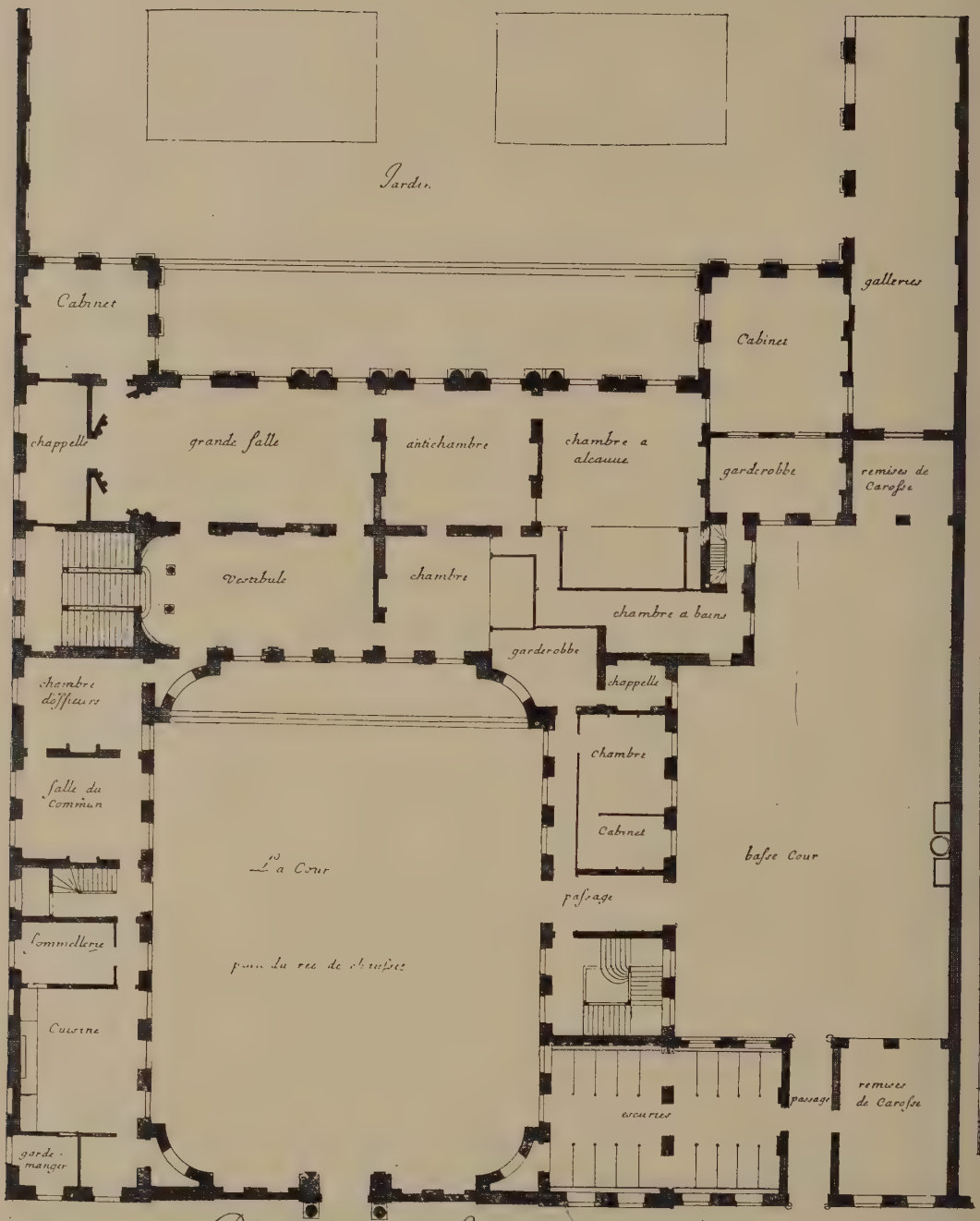
HÔTEL DU JARS. F. MANSART (see p. 6)

(PETIT MAROT)



Plan de l'hostel de Cheureuse fauxbourg sainct Germain

HÔTEL DE CHEVREUSE—PLAN. LE MUET (see p. 7 note)



Plan de l'hostel de Lionne ſcitué dans Paris rue

GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE LIONNE. LE VAU (see p. 7)

rooms were on the ground floor, there was no longer any reason for forming an elaborate staircase. Antechambers led to suites of apartments, each suite complete in itself, and the inconvenience of having no separate access to the rooms by corridors or passages was a good deal reduced by a number of small independent service stairs. The suites of rooms consisted of antechamber, chamber and cabinet or sitting-room, with either a *garde-robe* or bath-room. Le Vau, though inferior as an artist, was probably a more practical planner than François Mansart, and his design of Vaux le Vicomte, though carried out early in the reign, may be taken as typical of the plan of the great country house of the time of Louis XIV. In the seventeenth century the architects had got beyond the mere stringing together of rooms in a single thickness building, and had learnt to combine them in suites with some provision for independent access. They had also begun to experiment with oval and circular rooms, or rectangular rooms with semicircular recesses at the ends, such as those on the ground floor of the advanced pavilions at Maisons or the oval salon at Vaux, but curiously enough they still retained the moat. At Rincy[1] it was sixty feet wide, and the abandonment of the moat was one of the few changes introduced by Jules Hardouin Mansart. Clagny, the work in which he first made his reputation, repeated the old three-sided court, and the plan was most inconvenient, without the dignity of François Mansart or the picturesque licence of Le Vau. At Dampierre (about 1683) he was more successful, and here, though he adhered to the general plan of the main building, with central and side pavilions (the latter a good deal too wide for the façade), he made the wings on either side of the forecourt the same height as the central block, and separated them from the latter by narrow openings, so that there are three independent blocks of buildings. The effect is satisfactory, and a distinct gain in light and air. At Versailles Mansart contrived a great deal of ingenious planning in detail, but in a huge congeries of buildings, such as Versailles, the problem was how to tack building on to building. It did not afford any opportunity for the conception and logical carrying out of a great architectural idea. Indeed, Liberal Bruant's designs of the Hôpital des Invalides, and in a less degree that of the Salpêtrière, were the only monumental efforts in large planning of the reign of Louis XIV. Dampierre was perhaps the last word of country-house architecture for some considerable time in France. The building of great country houses, which had

[1] Built for Bordier, Intendant des Finances, now destroyed. Marot describes it as three leagues from Paris; Perelle as two.

proceeded without interruption from the beginning of the sixteenth to the third quarter of the seventeenth century was coming to an end. France was by that date very rich in beautiful country houses. In the days of François I, and still more of Henri IV and Louis XIII, it had been the fashion to build them in every part of the country, and it had been part of the policy of Henri IV to encourage his great noblemen to build in the country and attend to their estates. Under Louis XIV, less able than his grandfather, and advised by a *bourgeois* of genius, instead of by a sagacious country gentleman, this policy was reversed. The King encouraged his courtiers to build and to employ Mansart as their architect, but the houses built were almost exclusively in the near neighbourhood of the Court, and it was to nobody's interest to build outside the range of possible promotion. The country house degenerated into the large suburban villa, and the building of them came to a dead stop under the financial stress of the latter part of the reign.

In a less degree, as we shall find a little later, the town house was affected by the same conditions, but not before it had developed a well-recognized type of plan. The general custom was to set the house well back from the street, and to separate it from the entrance by a screen wall with one or two storey buildings and an important entrance in the centre. In a famous Paris house, the Hôtel de " Mons. Le Commandeur du Jars " (F. Mansart), the forecourt, 60 feet wide by 67 feet deep, was to one side of the site, with a range of buildings to the left, and the stables looking on to the street. The entrance to the house was in the centre of the farther end of the forecourt, and Mansart used the space to the right of the entrance vestibule up to the party wall for his main staircase. The entrance vestibule opened on to a large antechamber with its complete suite on the back or garden side of the house, and on the left on to a second smaller suite, with various small service staircases. At the Hôtel d'Argouge (now Musée Carnavalet), the entrance from the street passed through an archway into a forecourt 62 feet by 54 feet, and at the farther end of the forecourt François Mansart placed two doorways on opposite sides, that on the left opening on to a newel staircase; that on the right on to a vestibule from which access was given to the principal suite of rooms occupying the farther side of the forecourt, and to the main staircase; a separate carriage entrance to the stables from the street was provided in the right-hand corner. François Mansart, an artist of great independence and originality, placed his staircases and entrances wherever he found it most convenient, and his plans show much more freedom than those of any

of his contemporaries and successors except Antoine Le Pautre, who in spite of his bad taste appears to have been one of the ablest house planners of the seventeenth century. His treatment of a very awkward site at the Hôtel de Beauvais, was a masterpiece of planning ahead of any plan by his contemporaries, except perhaps, at a lower level, Cottart's plan of the Hôtel de Bizeuil. But the plans of both these houses were exceptional. The plan generally adopted for a town house was to separate the house from the street by one or more courts side by side, viz., the forecourt, flanked by lower ranges of buildings on one or both sides, and where the site admitted it, by a subordinate or base court, round which were ranged the offices, stables, and court houses.[1] All the principal rooms were in the main blocks at the farther end of the court or courts, the more important rooms looking out on to the gardens at the back. The side wings were sometimes utilized for galleries on the first floor, but more often the servants were crowded in above the stables, or wherever any odd place could be found for them.[2] In a town house designed by J. H. Mansart and engraved by Pierre Le Pautre, the servants had to sleep in an entresol above the stables and below a granary constructed in the roof.

In the main building the rooms were always arranged in sets; antechamber, chamber and cabinet, or antechamber, chamber, bed-chamber, cabinet, and *garde-robe*. These were entered from one another, but in important houses small service stairs to each suite were provided. These arrangements, so far, were workable, and a great advance in convenience on the old single thickness plan, such as that of the Hôtel de Sully in the Rue S. Antoine; the real difficulty comes in with the kitchen and offices. The usual provision of offices included the cuisine, the *Salle du Commun*, *sommellerie* and *garde-manger*. These were always placed in a wing, and it seems to have been the object of the designer to place them as far away as possible from any of the living rooms, no doubt to avoid the smell of cooking and the noise of the servants banging the plates; but the difficulties of service must have been intolerable. At the Hôtel de Lionne, designed by Le Vau, the kitchen and offices were at the extreme south-west angle next the street. In order to bring food to any possible dining-room, the servant had to traverse the whole length of a wing, passing

[1] Where it was possible a separate entrance was made from the street to the base court, as at the Hôtel de Chevreuse in the Faubourg S. Germain.

[2] Readers of eighteenth century memoirs will remember the "galetas" and its unsavoury record.

through various rooms on the way. In a design by J. H. Mansart for the Hôtel de Lorge,[1] the kitchen is shown in the south-west angle of the forecourt, and apparently the servant had to cross the court and go up the grand staircase to reach the *Salle-à-manger* on the first floor. I have noted already the extreme inconvenience of the arrangements both at Marly and Versailles; apparently Frenchmen in the reign of Louis XIV attached little importance to these details of domestic service.

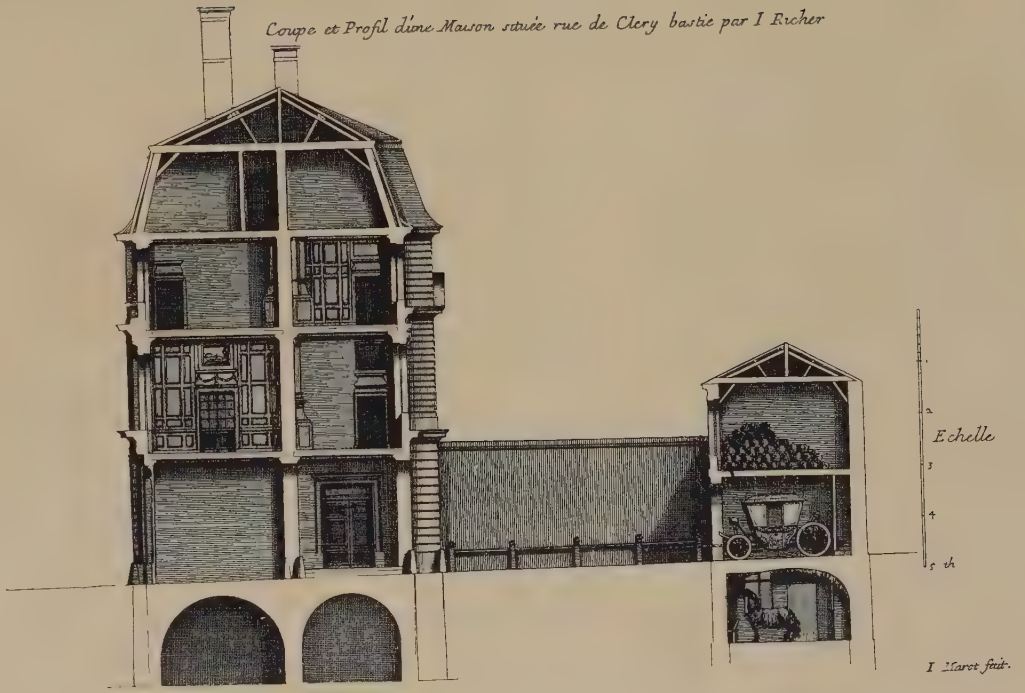
Another noticeable defect in these plans of town houses, is the habit that prevailed of placing the stables quite close to the house, and in immediate proximity to living rooms. The stables 36 feet 9 inches by 24 feet of the Hôtel du Jars contained nineteen horses; the stalls were only 3 feet wide in clear, and the whole work of the stable had to be done in a yard 18 feet 3 inches by 14 feet.[2] The substantial carriage horses of the period must have leant against each other for the only rest they could ever get. In the section of a house in the Rue de Clery, built and probably designed by J. Richer, the horse is shown in a low pitched cellar (8 feet 6 inches high), with no apparent means of getting it in or out.[3] Modern architects may have fallen behind in their standard of architectural technique, but they may at least claim—and English architects in particular—to have made a most material advance in the practical details of domestic architecture. The essential weakness of the Louis XIV ideal betrays itself in all its realizations. The search for "glory," immediate and personal, speedily degenerated into a search for mere glorification concentrated almost wholly on externals. The architecture of Louis XIV was all for show; it had little regard for the intimacies of life, its aim was to dazzle by its incessant and insistent magnificence.

In another direction, this boundless egotism was responsible for the comparative failure of public architecture, of what is now called "town planning," in the reign of Louis XIV. The point of view had changed since the days of Henri IV. That King had furthered schemes of improvement in the interests of his people, not for his own glorification—and it is significant that the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the occasion taken by great provincial towns such as Aix-en-Provence and Marseilles to petition the King for permission to set

[1] Rue Neuve S. Augustin.

[2] In the plan of the Hôtel de Maisons, Rue de L'Université, by L'Assurance, there was stabling for thirty-four horses, but the harness room only measured 20 ft. long with an average width of 6 ft. 6 in.

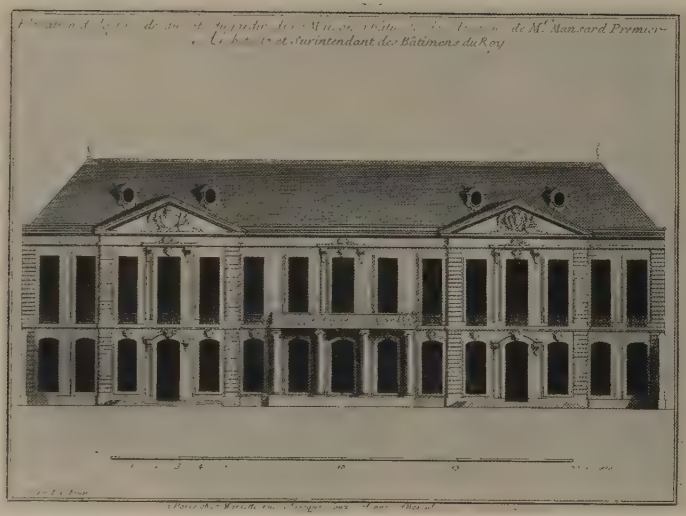
[3] Anthoine Le Pautre in one of his sections shows the stable underground.



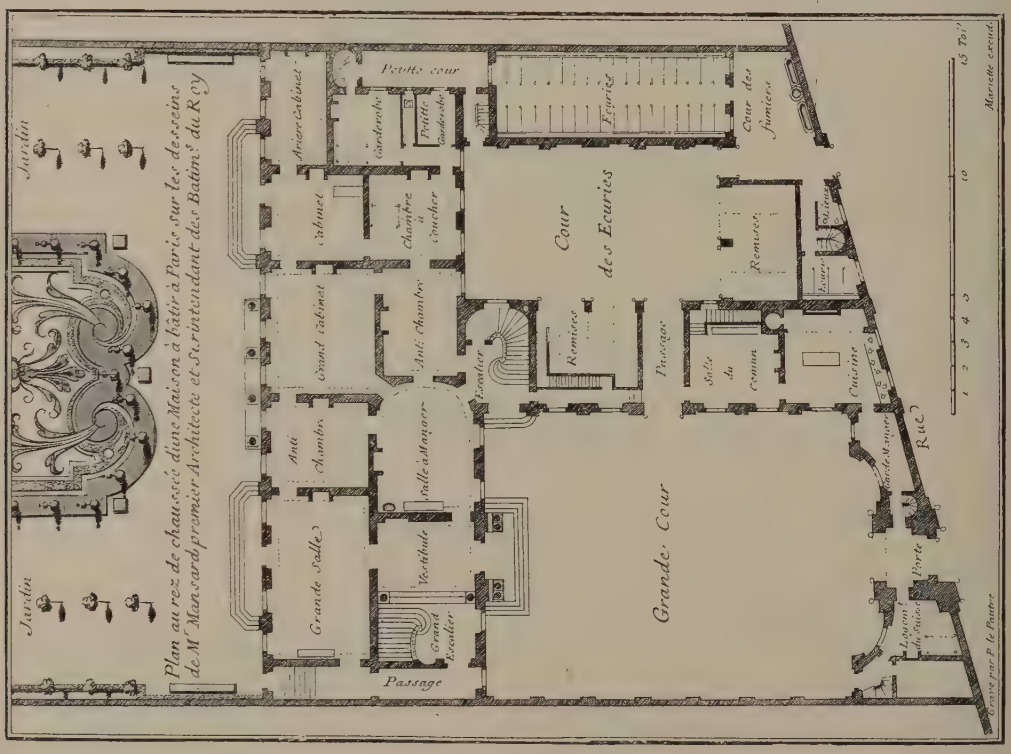
SECTION OF HOUSE IN RUE DE CLERY, PARIS. RICHER (see p. 8, and Vol. I, Pl. XXXII)

[Ill. TO FACE P. 8

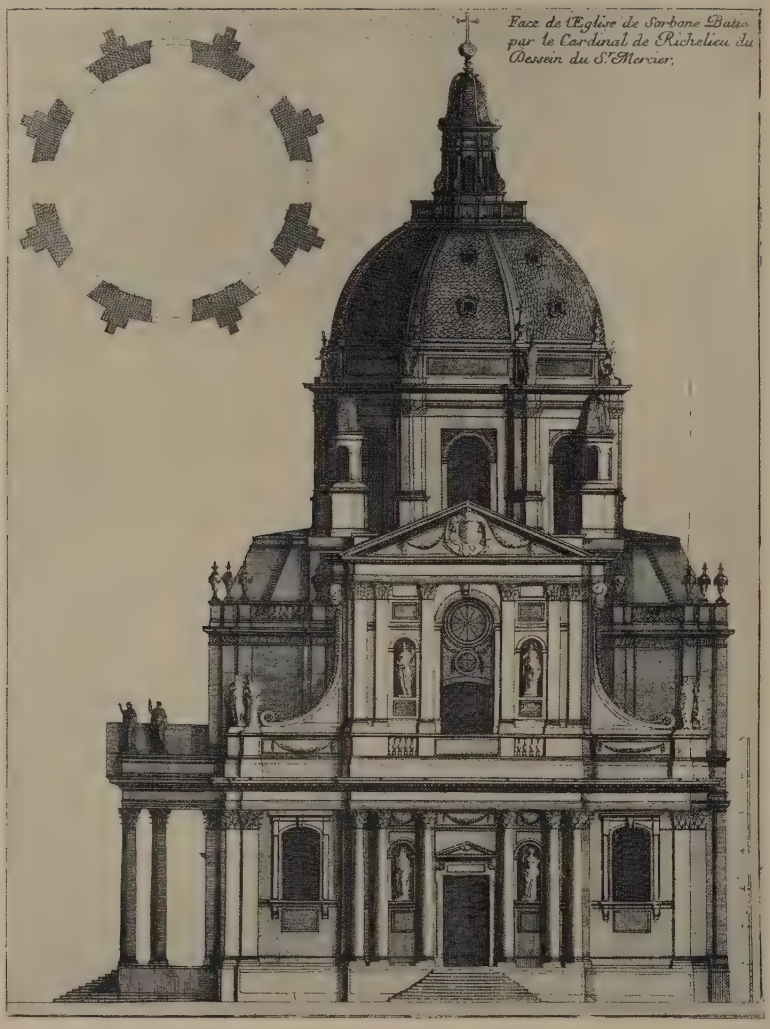
Pl. XCVI



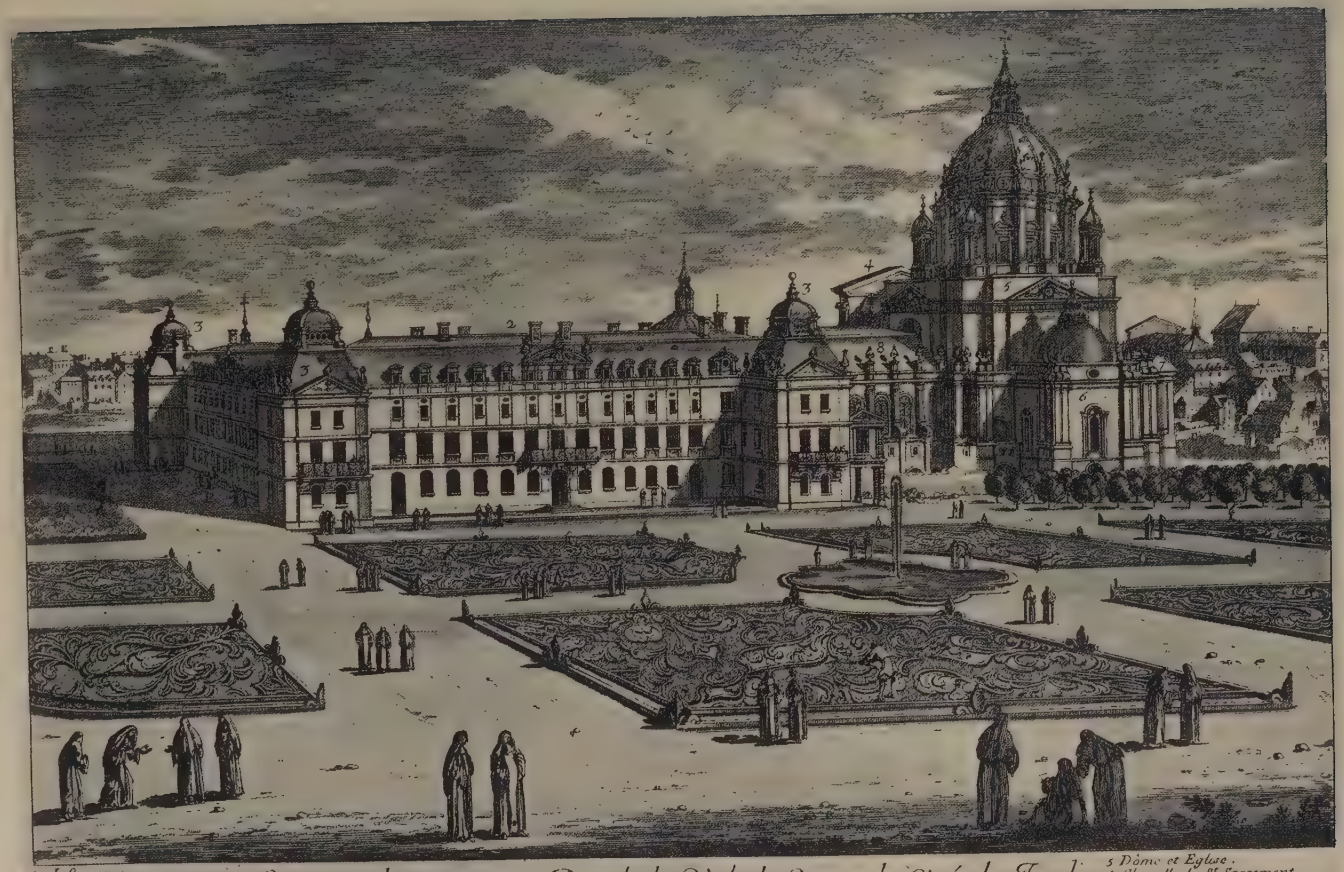
ELEVATION OF HOUSE DESIGNED BY J. H. MANSART (or L'ASSURANCE) (seq p. 10)



GROUND PLAN OF ABOVE



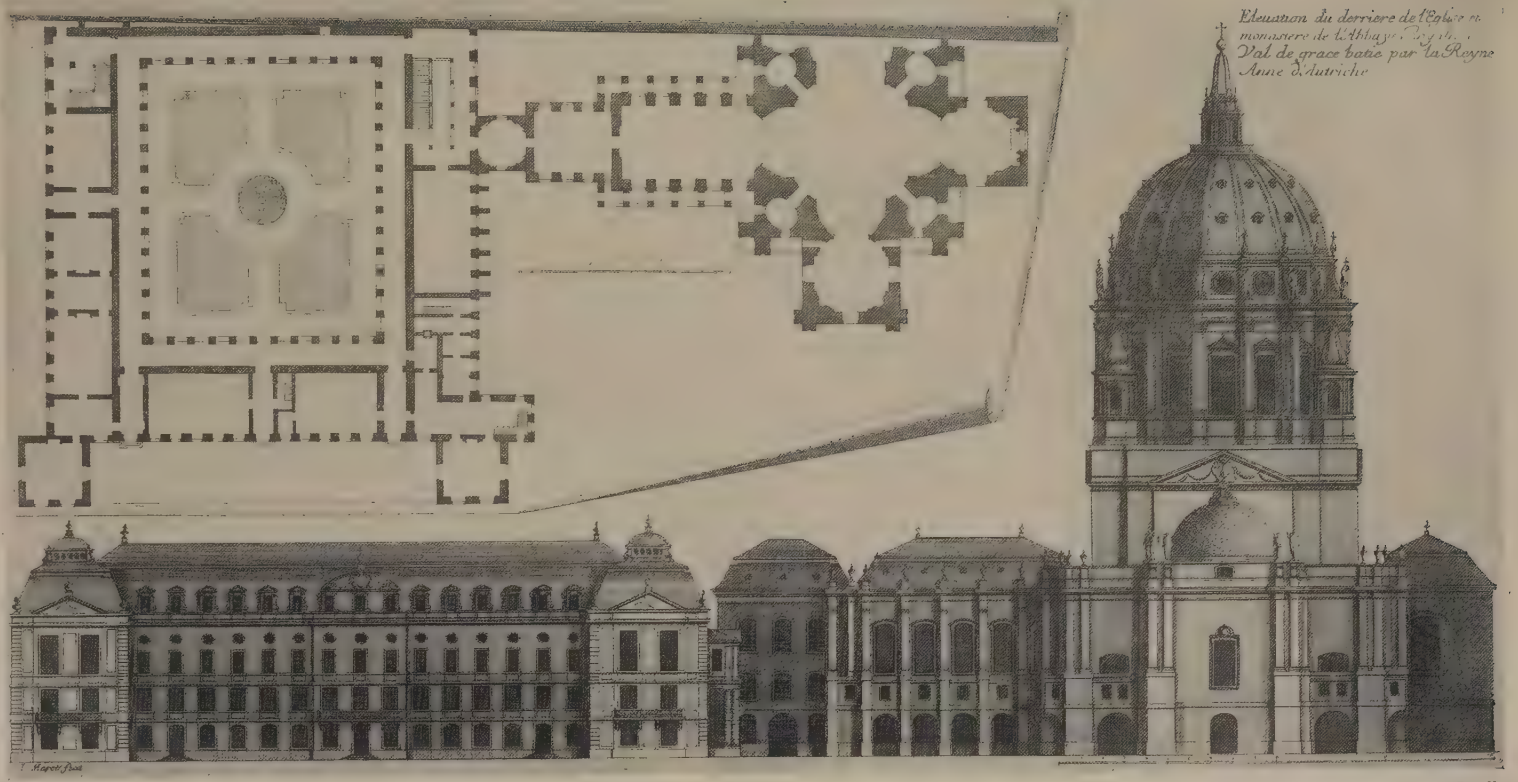
THE CHURCH OF THE SORBONNE. BY LE MERCIER (see p. 11)


1 Infirmerie.
2 Cloistre.
3 Pavillons.
4 Portail de l'Eglise.
La Veuë du Monastere Royal du Val de Grace, du Côté du Jardin
A Paris chez I. Marietle rue St. Iacques a la Victoire avec Privilege du Roy
5 Dôme et Eglise.
6 Chapelle du St. Sacrement.
7 Chapelle de la Reine.
8 Chœur des Religieuses.
[Perelle

THE MONASTERY AND CHURCH OF THE VAL DE GRÂCE, PARIS (see p. 11)

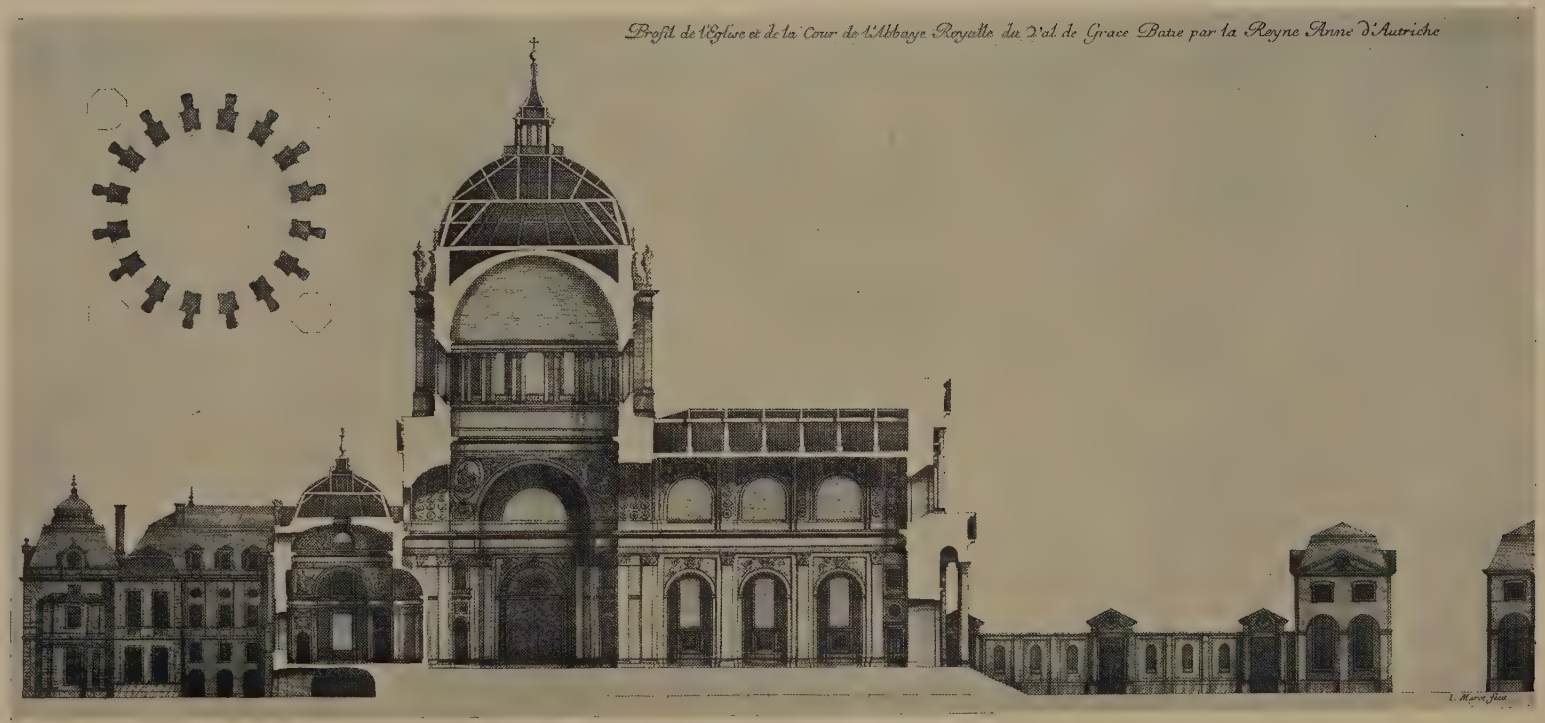
Pl. XCIX

[ll. pp. 8, 9


Elevation du derriere de l'Eglise et
monastere de l'Abbaye Royalle
Val de grace batie par la Royne
Anne d'Autriche
Perelle

CHURCH AND MONASTERY OF THE VAL DE GRÂCE (see p. 16)

ll. TO FACE P. 9]



CHURCH OF THE VAL DE GRÂCE. SECTION

up statues in his honour. At Marseilles that remarkable artist Pierre Puget was consulted, and he not only contracted with the Echevins of Marseilles for an equestrian figure of the King, but prepared five drawings for a grand Place to receive the figure; "L'un montre la Place aperçue du port avec la partie des constructions en façade sur la mer: l'autre la montre vue du cours." Puget proposed to pull down the arsenal in order to make room, and made his Place oval in plan, a recollection of Bernini's at Rome. His scheme met with a good deal of opposition, and was finally referred to Versailles. Here Mansart took on himself to make some alterations in Puget's design, which so incensed that artist that he finally intimated to the Echevins that if Mansart's designs were adopted, not only would he have nothing to do with the Place, but he would withdraw his undertaking to make the statue of the King. Ultimately the whole scheme was dropped.[1] The King himself appears to have taken little interest in these schemes of public improvement. In the early days after the death of Mazarin, the King, or rather Colbert, evidently intended to do something to improve the laying out of Paris. Blondel prepared a plan of the city with the help of his assistant Bullet, but little seems to have come of it. No attempt was made to carry out the fine scheme prepared for Henri IV[1] early in the century. Indeed, with the exception of certain improvements to the Bastion S. Antoine, a Quai on the Seine, the erection of the Porte S. Denis, the Porte S. Martin, and alterations to the Porte S. Antoine, the Place des Victoires and the Place Vendôme (all monuments to the glory of the King), Louis XIV did nothing for the city of Paris. While he spent millions on his palaces and gardens, he cared so little for Paris that he never finished the Louvre, stopped the great Arc de Triomphe du Trône when it was only a few feet above the ground, and transferred the Place Vendôme to the Municipality in exchange for a barrack for his Musqueteers at a ruinous cost to the city. There were fountains and cascades and statues in overwhelming profusion at Marly and Versailles, but the King himself never put up a single fountain in Paris. The monuments in the Place des Victoires and the Place Vendôme were put up to him but not by him,

[1] See "Les Grandes Artistes" (Puget, par Philippe Anquier, pp. 95-107). Puget was also consulted in regard to Le Cours de Marseille. Here he suggested that the central house of each block should have a large "porte cochère," in order that each block might appear to be a single magnificent palace.

[2] See "History of French Architecture, 1494-1661," vol. ii, pp. 41-46 (Reginald Blomfield).

and the Hospitals of La Salpêtrière and Les Invalides appear to have exhausted his interest in public buildings early in his reign. He identified the State with himself so completely that reforms and improvements which did not affect him personally seem to have left him unmoved. He took no pains to avoid the danger foreseen by Colbert. His dislike of Paris lost the throne the affection of the capital city, and the seeds of the French Revolution were sown by Louis XIV himself.

Towards the end of the reign a notable change appears in external architecture. The orders were deposed from their place of pride, the younger generation, such men as L'Assurance, the elder, found they could do nearly all they wanted without them. J. H. Mansart himself still used orders above orders in his elevations, in much the same way as François Mansart, but without his delicate sense of scale and relief, and, on the other hand, where he dispensed with them, as in the Ecuries at Versailles, he had been anticipated by François Mansart[1] and Le Muet. It was claimed for J. H. Mansart by his admirers that he was a great original designer, who might possibly be ignorant of antiquity, but amply atoned for it by the fertility of his invention. I can find little trace of this in his known work—nearly all of which was designed before he became Surintendant. The work assigned to him after that date I believe to have been in fact designed by his assistants, L'Assurance and others, and in this later work no uniform manner is traceable. The designs, for example, of the Hôtel de l'Orge engraved by Mariette, and attributed to Mansart, are of appalling ineptitude. On the other hand, there is a design of a house "à bâtir" at the same date attributed to Mansart which is as good as the other is bad. The plain rustications and simple and well spaced treatment of the façade suggest the hand of L'Assurance, and certainly cannot be by the same designer as the Hôtel de l'Orge. Yet both are attributed to J. H. Mansart, and the conclusion I come to is that, in his latter days, the quality of his work depended on the capacity of the particular member of his staff to whom the work of preparing the drawings was assigned, and that these later works represent, not J. H. Mansart and the characteristic manner of Louis XIV, but the younger school who came into their own under the Regency after the death of Mansart and Louis XIV.

In Church architecture the French architects, at any rate in Paris,

[1] *E.g.*, on the rustications of the great doorway of the Hôtel de Conty (see Marot's engraving).

were mainly occupied with the problems of the dome. Le Mercier's dome at the Sorbonne set the example. Next came the Val de Grâce, which followed S. Peter's in its external treatment, with the substitution of single engaged columns as buttresses for the coupled columns of S. Peter's. At the Invalides J. H. Mansart went back to the coupled columns, and his dome, in spite of the criticisms I have already suggested, is certainly the finest of the three. Le Vau's dome at the Quatre Nations, and Errard's in the Church of the Assumption, were less ambitious and not successful in either case. Neither of them approaches François Mansart's interior of the Church Ste. Marie in the Faubourg S. Antoine, and Le Vau's dome is far too low on his building.

On the whole, I come to the conclusion that, notwithstanding the vast amount of building undertaken in the reign of Louis XIV, no great advance was made in French architecture during that period, except in domestic planning. J. H. Mansart really belonged to the old school rather than the new. In spite of certain innovations that he introduced in the details of decoration, he was not the man to reconstitute architecture, and the change in direction came with the school that succeeded him, with men who, though they had worked for J. H. Mansart, had been quietly elaborating a manner of their own. These men were no longer dominated by the orders. The mysteries of Vitruvius had become so familiar that they no longer furnished a reason for an exhibition of architectural technique, and there was no opportunity for further experiment.[1] The orders had taken their place in the vernacular architecture of the time, and we shall find that J. H. Mansart's successors, though they used them from time to time to mark important features, were by no means impressed with any urgent necessity for their use at all. The reaction of the eighteenth century against dogmatic classic had already begun. Architects at length realized that the whole paraphernalia of the orders, resuscitated as it had been from the fragments of Roman Temples and Basilicas, had no necessary relevance to domestic architecture. The real importance of the reign of Louis XIV in the history of architecture lies less in its actual buildings than in Colbert's reorganization of the arts, and the freeing of certain lines of thought that slowly fought their way to articulate utterance. The process is apparent in the records of the conferences of the Academy of Architecture. In its earlier days the

[1] The futile competition for a French order, and the use of oval instead of circular columns on one special occasion, sum up the only attempts at innovation.

Academy was still oppressed by the weight of authority. To Blondel, its first Director and Professor, the rules laid down by the ancients (and the ancients to all intents meant Vitruvius) were pretty nearly sacrosanct. Deviations, if conceivable, were undesirable, and the problem of architecture was not so much to translate construction into beautiful forms as to ring the changes on the orders within certain definite and ascertainable limits. Blondel's insistence on authority, and his very learned exposition of its teaching had done a real service in steadying architecture, and recalling architects to the necessity of a close and incessant study of their technique, but there was at the same time and in active opposition to the heavy hand of the Ancients, another spirit in the air. Perrault, the free-lance and free-thinker in architecture, had carried through a brilliant, if short-lived, campaign on the side of the Moderns, and within the solemn walls of the Academy itself there were men of active and inquiring minds who were not prepared to spend the rest of their lives in tedious exercises in classical design. The practical and logical spirit of the Frenchman very soon asserted itself. The Academicians began to approach the orders from the point of view of practice, and speedily extended their researches to problems of construction and the nature and use of materials. The spirit of inquiry, the desire "rerum cognoscere causas," which inspired the Academy of Science, extended its influence to the Academy of Architecture, and here it showed itself in tendencies which have ever since dominated French architecture. In the first place a deliberate attempt was made to standardize architecture by the establishment of recognized rules of technique. This, of course, was no new thing. It had been done by the Italians in their editions of Vitruvius and in treatises of their own. It had been attempted by De L'Orme, Bullant, and Goujon. But the fine enthusiasm of the Renaissance had been lost. The study of antiquity which had been pursued for the love of knowledge had degenerated into the search for cribs and *clichés*; the draughtsmen and the ornamentalists had caught up the fashionable manner at a point many stages removed from the original, and all sorts of ignorant vagaries and licences had crept into circulation. The amateur, Roland Fréart de Chambray, for example, in his parallels of architecture, had made things worse by his inaccuracies. It was the first business of the Academy to put this right, and to make authoritative pronouncement on the actual practice of antiquity. They ransacked the writings of the Italians—Palladio, Scamozzi, Vignola—compared their rules with the remains of famous buildings in Rome, and here

again they found themselves at fault. Writers and students hitherto had been far too casual in their methods to warrant the acceptance of their statements, and still less of their dimensions. Serlio's illustrations were only approximately accurate, and his wood-cuts much too rough to indicate exact measurements. Du Perac had made sketches only, honest as far as they went, but not to scale. Du Cerceau, invaluable for the houses of his own time, spoilt his work by his deplorable inventions. De L'Orme had made valiant efforts to supplement Serlio, but his method was too discursive, too dependent on the contents of his own sketch-book. And, moreover, he gives one the impression of a man writing in complete isolation, that is to say, without any consensus of educated opinion either to check him or to back him. He was, indeed, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and the great work of which he laid the foundations remained unfinished for another hundred years. His writings never obtained the influence they deserved, partly owing to the obscurity of his style, partly to the rush of those most mischievous pattern books which followed the labours of the scholars at the end of the sixteenth century. The ridiculous versions of Baalbec and Greek Temples, invented and engraved by Jean Marot, probably convinced the Academy that the work of accurately recording the buildings of antiquity must be taken in hand at once; and Colbert's foresight had provided the machinery in the French Academy at Rome. "Les Édifices Antiques de Rome" (1682), by Desgodetz, was the first in the long series of accurate and admirably executed measured drawings, which is one of the great traditions of modern French architecture.[1]

In the early days of the Academy, in the flush of its first enthusiasm, the impelling motive throughout was a sincere anxiety to get at the facts, whether those facts were the measurements of a ruined building, the scientific formula for the setting out of entasis and volute, the nature and behaviour of materials, or the forces to be dealt with in every kind of construction. Though the Academicians had ignored Claude Perrault, they themselves, or at least the younger men among them, were influenced more than they admitted by that champion of free-thought, by his interpretation of architecture as the art of organic construction, and his repudiation of the merely theatrical conception of the art entertained by Bernini and the Italians. The rout of Bernini meant

[1] The modern tendency of Prix de Rome students to rely unduly on the elaborate finish of their drawings, is a regrettable departure from the standard of austere scholarship of the first Director of the School of Rome. The most delicate gradations of colour wash are immaterial in comparison with correct dimensions and accuracy of line.

the final overthrow of the Italian influence and the complete reassertion of the French genius, keen, trenchant, logical and sincere. With all their susceptibility to ideas, and in spite of their *légèreté*, the French are perhaps the most tenacious race in the world.

The reign of Louis XIV is immensely important in the history of French architecture. The lines laid down by Colbert are still in the main those on which modern architecture is working, and it was not his fault that the impetus that he gave to the arts of France died away in the latter part of the reign. Architecture may be paramount among the arts, but more than any other it is at the mercy of external conditions. Owing to social and political causes the art fell away in the eighteenth century. The age of great building enterprise ended with the seventeenth century. Louis XIV had built himself and his courtiers to the verge of bankruptcy. Moreover, deep, underlying forces were at work. The political and social condition of France was unsound. The solemn hypocrisy of the latter days of Louis XIV had its necessary corollary in the unbridled licence of the Regent and the disasters of Law and his system. The reaction against all authority, active at first only in the world of ideas, was gradually rising to the surface with the men of action. Throughout the eighteenth century the menace of the imminent catastrophe becomes ever more sinister and insistent.

CHAPTER XVII

Daviler and Desgodetz

THERE is a famous portrait, by Hyacinte Rigaud, engraved by Edelinck, of J. H. Mansart, sitting in a chair of state, in his robes as a Chevalier of the Order of S. Michael, with an enormous periwig, a large, florid, astute person, who gives the impression of the professional super-man, the successful collector of innumerable "jobs" duly carried out for him by a staff of assistants, "sous clef," or, as they would now be called, "ghosts." The whole presentation is typical of the reign of Louis XIV, a regime of ponderous and overpowering authority, one man first, the rest nowhere: among the able practitioners in the Royal service one searches in vain for distinct individualities. In the earlier period there were men of character and distinction, Claude Perrault, gentleman and scholar; Blondel, his erudite and acrimonious antagonist; Charles Errard, painter, architect and swordsman; Antoine Le Pautre, ill-balanced and irregular, but not without a touch of genius—all of them men who lived their lives their own way. But as Colbert's machine settled down to its bearings individualities tended to disappear; both King and Ministers preferred the obedient humble servant to the man of ideas. The result was a high average of technical competence and an advance in directions which I have already indicated, but the romance of Art was gone, scared out of existence by Mansart's periwig.

The brief and pathetic career of Augustin Charles Daviler was significant of much. Born in Paris in 1653 of a Lorraine family from Nancy, he was one of the first students to enter the school of the newly-formed Royal Academy of Architecture at the Palais Royal in January 1672.[1] In 1674 he was nominated as a Royal Pensionary for

[1] The Academy of Architecture was established in a dependence of the Palais Royal, the old Hôtel de Richelieu, and remained here till 1692, when it was moved to the Louvre. "Procès-Verbaux," i, 2. Note by Lemonnier.

the Academy at Rome, and on 19 September 1674 a warrant for 200 francs was issued "à Daviler le jeune pour le voyage qu'il va faire en Italie pour estudier dans l'académie d'Architecture à Rome."[1] Daviler started with his friend and fellow-student, Desgodetz, intending to go by sea from Marseilles to Genoa, but their ship was captured by Barbary pirates. They were taken to Algiers,[2] where they remained as prisoners for the next sixteen months, till Colbert rescued them by means of an exchange of prisoners, and the two students finally reached Rome in 1676. In December of that year Errard, the Director, reported to Colbert, "Le Sr. Daviler, architecte, qui est l'un de ceux, que votre exselance a délivré de l'esclavage des Teurs est un garson sage, lequel s'applique à l'éteude. Il lui manque du dessein, lequel il a besoin d'éteudier, comme je lui faitz présentement apliquer."[3] Errard very properly attached vital importance to draughtsmanship, which, as he put it, "est la baze et fondement de se bel art." Colbert, who took a close personal interest in the progress of the students, but knew as much about drawing as a washerwoman, wrote to Errard in March 1679 that he had seen Daviler's drawings of the Palazzo Farnese and certain churches, and was fairly satisfied, "Mais je n'ay pas trouvé, qu'il dessinait assez bien." Still, as Errard thought well of the young man, he wished Daviler to continue his studies at Rome, and if Errard found he had sufficient capacity he wished Daviler to make a special study of water, its supply and service, conduits, aqueducts, the different effects obtainable, the behaviour of water, how high it would rise, and so on, and also to examine all the best examples of water-work in Italy.[4] The gardens at Versailles were growing apace, and Le Nôtre and the French garden designers relied on water for their most brilliant effects. In the summer of 1679 Colbert wrote again to Errard expressing surprise that he had received no report on Daviler's progress, and some doubt as to whether Daviler was as skilled in hydraulics as he believed himself to be. Daviler had already asked for leave to return to France, and Colbert granted it rather reluctantly, promising on his return to see

[1] "Comptes," i, 781. It is significant that the "Académie de France" at Rome should be called "L'Académie d'Architecture." Colbert was thinking of building rather than painting or sculpture. There is no mention of the award in the "Procès-Verbaux" of the Academy of Architecture. The Academicians then acting were Blondel, Bruand, Gittard, Le Pautre, and D'Orbay.

[2] Mariette says that while a prisoner Daviler designed a mosque which was afterwards built in Tunis.

[3] "Correspondance," i, 64-65.

[4] *Ibid.*, i, 79.

whether Daviler possessed any real capacity in the matter.[1] He appears to have returned to Paris in 1680, for in December of that year he presented the Academy of Architecture in Paris with a plan of the church and colonnade of S. Peter's in Rome, "fort exact et fort grand," and the Academy was so pleased with it that it set it up in its rooms "comme un gage de la reconnoissance que ledit Sr. Davillers rend par ce présent à l'académie d'architecture," of which he was one of the first students, and on whose nomination he had been sent to Rome, "pour s'y perfectionner."[2]

The relations of the Academy of Architecture to its students are here shown in a very favourable light. The Academicians, still in the first glow of their enthusiasm, took more than a merely perfunctory interest in their students. In 1681 Daviler came before them again with a design of his own of a triumphal arch, the centre arch round, the two side arches square-headed. The company, probably guided by Blondel, considered that the latter should be reserved for temples. They also criticised a design for a basilica in the Italian manner, but they dealt very gently with the young architect. They commended his industry, but pointed out that a high-pitched roof (à la Française) was unsuitable for a building à l'Italienne.[3]

Meanwhile, Daviler had been making researches into the life and work of Vignola, and in 1683 he read his preface to the Academy. The company judged that "ses expressions sont justes, et les notes qu'il y adjouste ingénieuses et sçavantes." Everything was going on well till M. de Blainville[4] appeared at a conference of the Academy, informed that body that it was time that some result of its labours should be brought before the public, which should be worthy of its Royal title, and suggested that members should address themselves to a consideration of "la salubrité, la solidité, la commodité et la beauté du Bastiment." The voice was the voice of Jacob, but the hand was the hand of Esau.

[1] Mariette says Daviler was in Rome five years. The Correspondence of the Directors shows that he was there not quite four.

[2] "Procès-Verbaux," i, 300.

[3] *Ibid.*, i, 309. In August, 1681, Daviler submitted a design for a dome for the Sisters of the Annunciation at S. Denis, and the Academy suggested that he should make further sketches.

[4] M. de Blainville was the fourth son of Colbert, and in 1674 had been granted the succession to the post of "Surintendant des Bâtiments" held by his father, and it was in this capacity that he visited the Academy. On the death of Colbert, Louvois took the post himself. Blainville enlisted in the army and was killed at the battle of Blenheim in 1704 (see Lemonnier, "Procès-Verbaux," i, 272, and ii, 36).

Colbert, whose temper became more and more uncertain, was impatient for immediate results. The ancients and the classics and their commentators were swept away. Vignola and Daviler were dropped abruptly, and the Academy devoted itself thenceforward to problems of construction: bridge building, foundations, stones, bricks, and mortar.

Daviler thus found himself headed off from the quiet studious future that he might have hoped for with the help of the Academy, and had to look elsewhere for a career, but there was no opening in Paris for a young man with no powerful family backing, and lacking in the power of resolute self-assertion. In the autumn of 1684 Daviler entered the office of J. H. Mansart as one of his draughtsmen at a salary of 1,200 francs a year.[1] Here he continued till 1689,[2] and Mariette says of Mansart that "Il ne fasoit rien pour le Roi qui ne passat par ses mains." In his leisure moments he had been steadily advancing with his work on Vignola, and his commentary had now developed into a systematic course, on which he consulted the leading architects of the time, D'Orbay in particular, and in 1691 he produced his "Cours d'Architecture qui comprend les ordres de Vignole," and included a life of Vignola, with a description of buildings designed by him and by Michael Angelo, and a dictionary of architectural terms. The book was well received, and Daviler hoped on the strength of it to be able to start a practice of his own in Paris. "Mais commençant à s'appercevoir que tant qu'il demeuroist attaché à M. Mansart et qu'il travailleroit en sous ordre, il ne falloit pas s'en flatter, il se dégouta de son emploi,"[3] and accepted an invitation from the town of Montpellier to undertake the supervision of a triumphal arch to Louis XIV, to be built there from the designs of D'Orbay.[4] No doubt he was nominated by D'Orbay, who seems to have been a loyal friend, whereas Mansart treated him exceedingly badly. In a letter to Langlois, the print-seller, written in September 1691, Daviler complained bitterly of the conduct of Mansart, "qui loin de lui être favorable, le traversoit dans le dessein qu'il avoit formé de se faire reçevoir dans l'académie Royale d'Architecture. Il se repent d'avoir perdu cinq années de son temps auprès de cet architecte."[5]

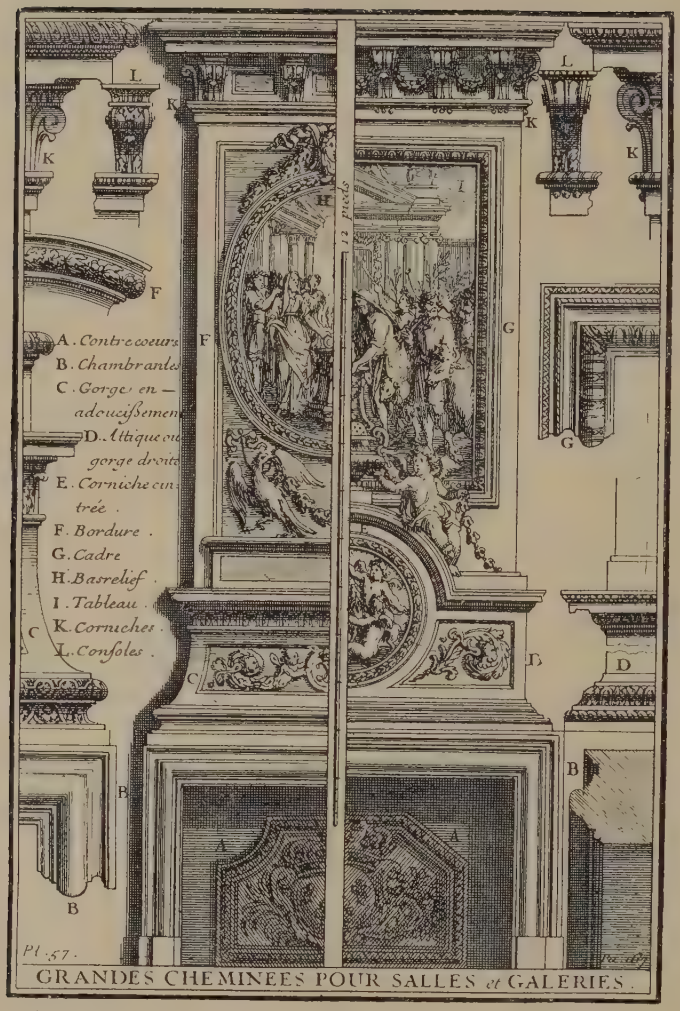
[1] In January, 1686, 1,500 francs were paid to Daviler and Cauchy respectively for five quarters payment. Cauchy had been with Mansart since 1683. Pierre Cailleteau "dit L'Assurance" was also receiving this salary as one of Mansart's draughtsmen ("Comptes," ii, 720).

[2] Last entry in the "Comptes."

[3] Mariette.

[4] La Porte du Peron at Montpellier.

[5] Mariette, Abecedario (Daviler).



LOUIS XIV CHIMNEY-PIECES (see p. 20)
(FROM DAVILER, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE")

Daviler went to Montpellier in July, 1691, and completed the Triumphal Arch so successfully that M. de Basvile, governor of Languedoc, appointed him architect of the province of Languedoc in 1693, and Daviler was employed at Béziers, Carcassonne, Nîmes, Montpellier, and Toulouse.[1] Other designs were stopped for want of funds, but Daviler had already won himself high esteem in the South when he died in 1700 at the early age of forty-seven.

His "Cours d'Architecture" (1691), a standard work to this day, remains his principal achievement. Its merits were at once recognized, not only in France but in Italy; a pirated edition appeared in Holland, and Daviler had himself intended to issue a second edition, but died before he could carry out his intention. The second edition, edited by Le Blond, appeared in 1710; a third edition in 1720; a fourth edition in 1738, and in 1750 Mariette issued a fifth and enlarged edition. Referring to the edition of 1691 he says: "Le succès en fut si prompt et si heureux, qu'on pouvoit penser que cet ouvrage étoit exempt de toute critique." The only changes made in the original editions were certain additions necessary to bring it up to date, because "la decoration interieure des appartements a eprouvé depuis de si grands changements, qu'elle a tout a fait changé de face cette partie d'architecture."[2]

Daviler selected Vignola for his study because, of all the Italian architects, he had adhered most closely to the proportions of the antique, and because his rules were simple and more intelligible than those of Palladio. He also included an account of Michael Angelo, whom he considered the greatest of modern architects. Daviler's standpoint was that of all serious students of architecture in the latter part of the seventeenth century. With profound respect for antiquity, he yet insisted that it must be studied with discriminating intelligence, and he constantly checks it by reference to the work of famous modern French architects, Lemercier, De Brosse, both the Mansarts, and even Bruand and Bullet. He believed Roman architecture to be far superior to Greek, "tant pour le correction, que pour la grand manière, qu'ils avoient dans leur architecture," and though every country and people had its own idiom, it was for this reason that architects should study the buildings of Italy. Also they must make themselves masters of their art at all points, and particularly of drawing, in order to win and preserve the confidence of their workmen. Moreover, from time to time

[1] The Archbishop's palace.

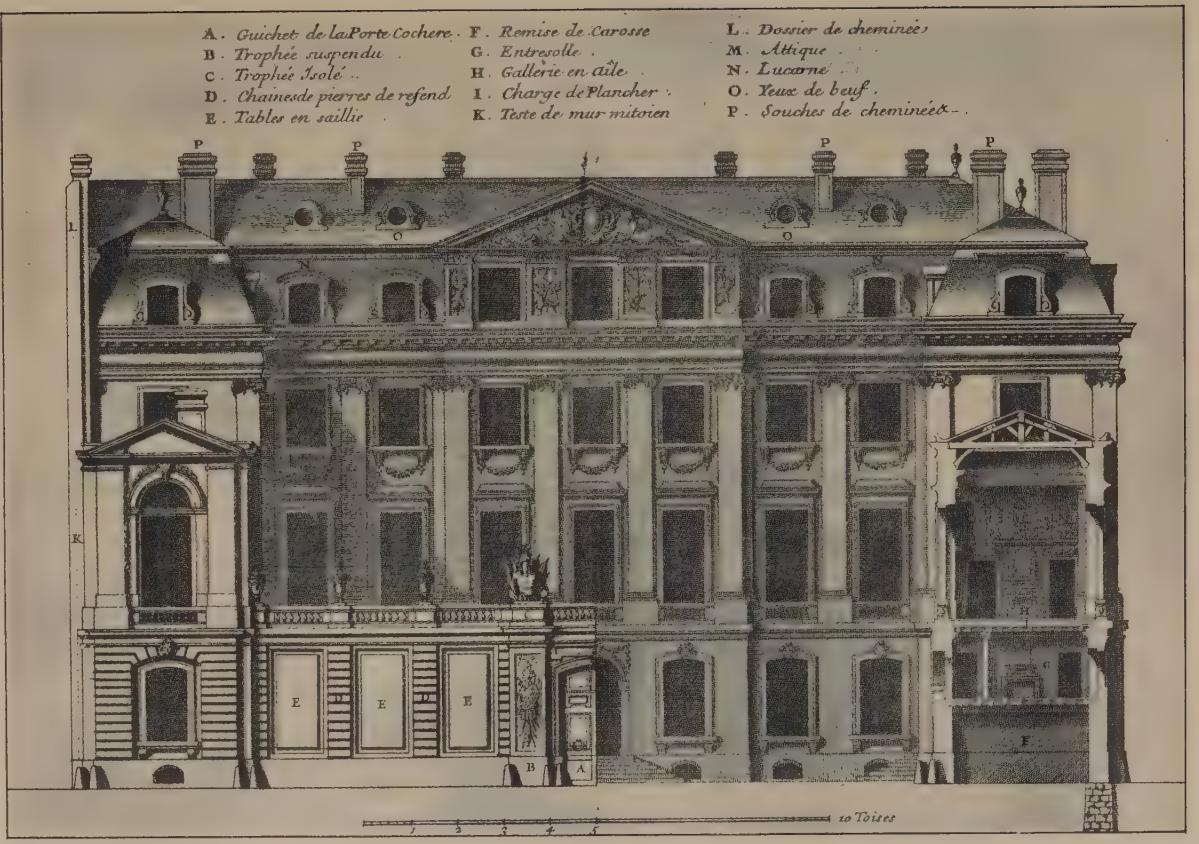
[2] Introduction to edition of 1750.

it was necessary to take stock of architecture[1] and reassert its essential principles, if the art was to avoid the extravagance and licence into which it had fallen in the hands of such men as Pietro da Cortona, Rainaldi, and Borromini, men who deliberately set up their own caprices as models, and were heading straight for a manner, "moins artiste que le Gothique, et tout a fait opposée à l'antique."

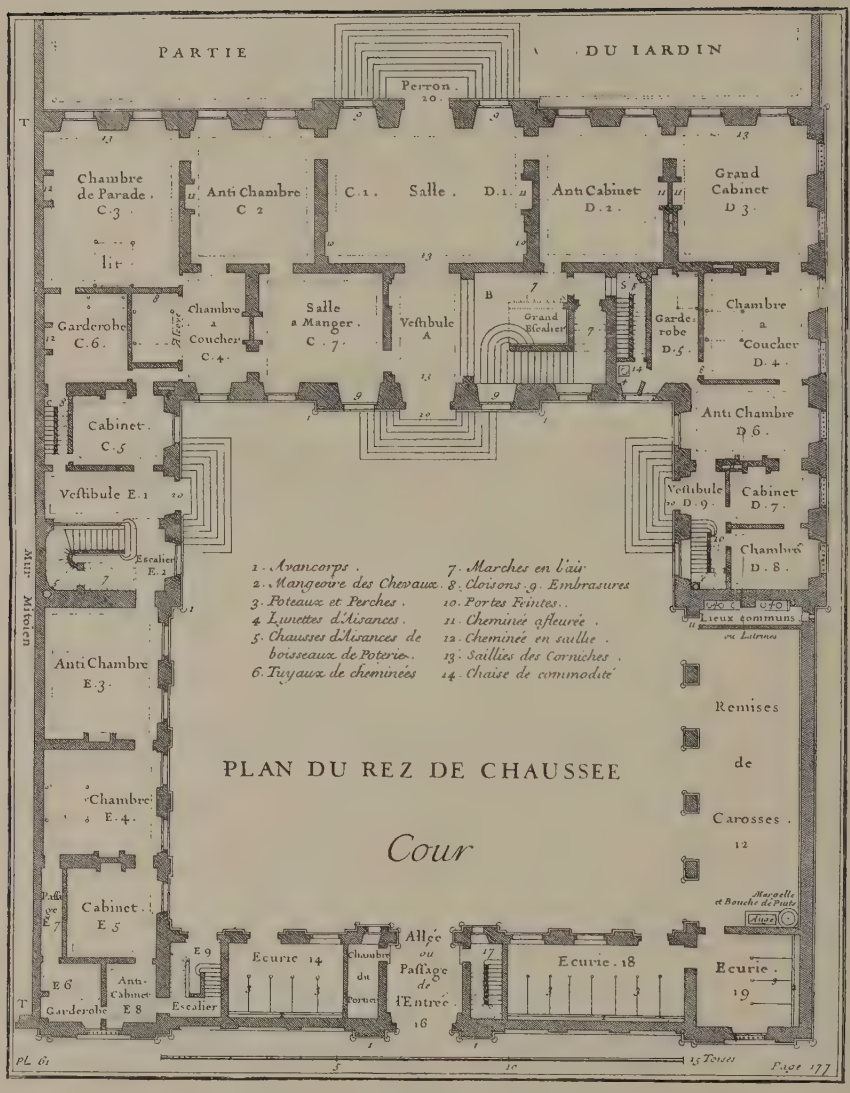
Daviler's treatment of his subject was thoroughly practical, and his work, with its admirable plates and clear explanations, must have been a godsend to students of architecture after the rather pedantic lucubrations of François Blondel. The orders, doorways and entrances, windows, lucarnes, and "yeux de beuf" balconies, niches, chimneys, and chimney-pieces are dealt with in detail, and excellent rules of practice are given, such as "sur tout il faut eviter de couper la cornice au devant de chaque lucarne." These men had really mastered the first principles of classical architecture, its instinctive feeling for breadth and simplicity, its dislike of fussiness and of any detail that interfered with restful design, its constant search for rhythm and proportion. Daviler gives plans and elevations of a typical house, and a very good design it is, though the plan was already old-fashioned when Le Blond brought out his edition of 1710. Staircases and roofs, mansards, domes, and the "comble a l'impériale" (ogee cupolas) with the designs of gardens,[2] complete the first part of the "Cours." This is followed by a detailed consideration of materials and construction, an account with illustrations of buildings by Vignola and Michael Angelo, and further details, such as cornices, rustications, and panelling. The second volume is entirely devoted to a dictionary of terms. From the point of view of practical architecture, Daviler's "Cours d'Architecture" was the best work of its kind that had yet been issued. Its style is lucid and readable, the illustrations are excellent, and Daviler knew very well what he was writing about, both as a practical architect and as a student of architecture. What Bullet did for the business man and the surveyor, Daviler did for the working architect, for the man, that is, whose concern lay with the design and the construction of buildings. The popularity of his book was well deserved, and the modern student may still study its pages with advantage.

[1] "Renouveller de tems en tems."

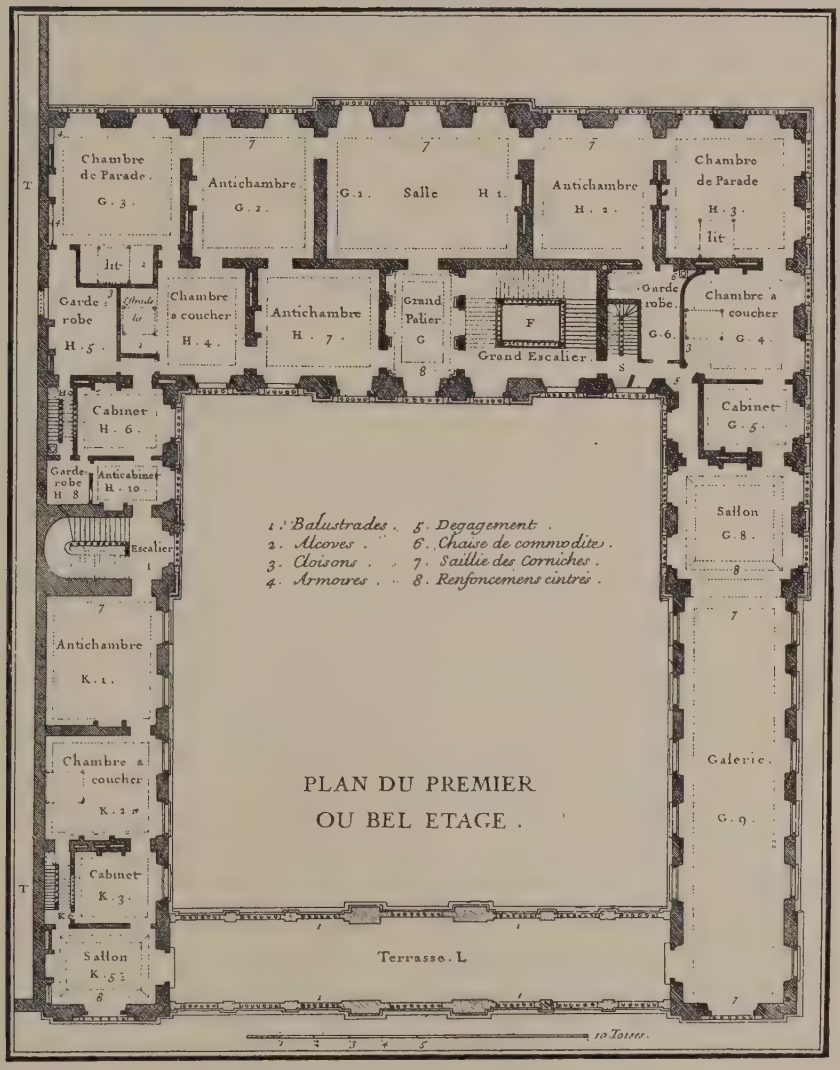
[2] Vol. i, 190. "La science d'Architecture embrassant toutes les connoissances qui servent tant à la construction qu'a la Décoration des Édifices, comme les jardins en sont inséparables, et contribuent notablement à leur embellissement, j'ay cru qu'il estoit utile; . . . de traiter en général de la manière de les décorer."



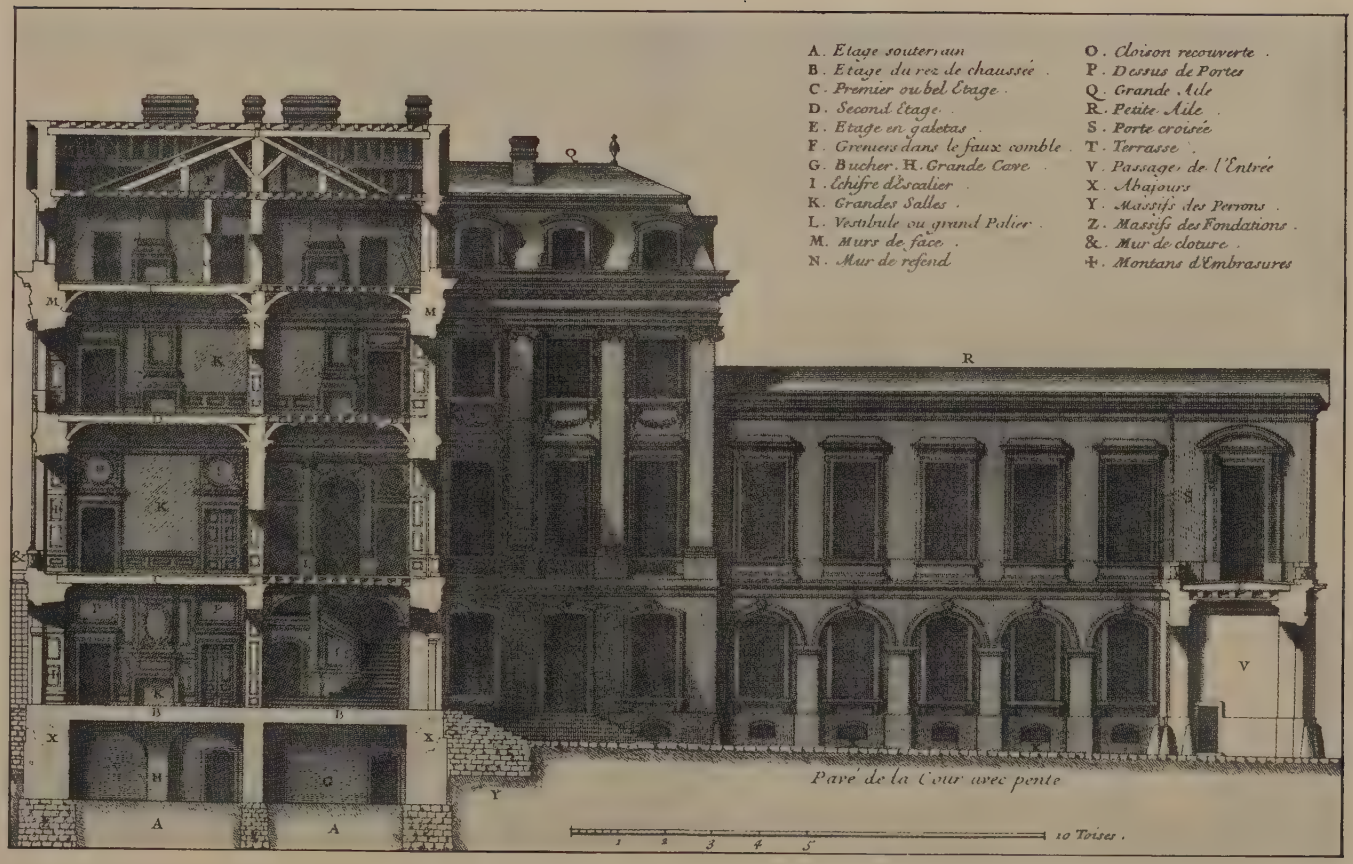
HALF-ELEVATIONS OF A HOUSE-DESIGN BY DAVILER (p. 20)



GROUND PLAN OF HOUSE BY DAVILER



FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF HOUSE BY DAVILER


A. Etage souterrain
B. Etage du rez de chaussée
C. Premier ou bel Etage
D. Second Etage
E. Etage en galetas
F. Greniers dans le faux comble
G. Bucher. H. Grande Cave
I. Chifre d'Escalier
K. Grandes Salles
L. Vestibule ou grand Palier
M. Murs de face
N. Mur de refend
O. Cloison recouverte
P. Dessus de Portes
Q. Grande Aile
R. Petite Aile
S. Porte croisée
T. Terrasse
V. Passage de l'Entrée
X. Abajours
Y. Massifs des Perrons
Z. Massifs des Fondations
&. Mur de cloture
+. Montans d'Embrasures
Pavé de la Cour avec pente
1 2 3 4 5 10 Toises.

SECTION OF HOUSE BY DAVILER

II. TO FACE P. 21]

Antoine Desgodetz was born in the same year as Daviler (1653), but, unlike Daviler, must have very early shown his ability as a draughtsman, for he was already employed in making drawings and plans of the royal buildings in 1671.[1] He received further payments for plans and elevations of royal houses in 1672-73, and in 1674, when he was paid 460 francs, he is described as "dessignateur." It was in the autumn of this year that he started for Rome with Daviler, but was carried off to Algiers by pirates, and did not finally reach Rome till the beginning of 1676. Desgodetz does not appear to have been a student in the school of the Academy of Architecture in Paris; there is no entry of any grant of a pension to him for the School at Rome, nor is he mentioned in the Correspondence of the Director of that School during the year and a half that he spent in Rome, drawing and measuring most of its important ancient buildings. He must have worked with great rapidity for he was back in France in 1677.

In December, 1677,[2] Desgodetz submitted his drawings to the Academy of Architecture in Paris, and he appears to have resumed his occupation as a draughtsman, for in December, 1678, there is an entry in the "Comptes" of payments of 200 francs "à Desgodetz, desseignateur pour plusieurs desseins et plants des maisons Royales," and in 1679 he and Matthieu were still employed on "plusieurs plans, elevations et profils."

In 1680 he was appointed to the permanent post of "Commis à la conduite des reparations" at Chambord at a salary of 1,800 francs per annum, a post which in 1683 is described in the "Comptes" as "Commis au controle des bastimens de Chambord."[3]

Early in 1682 Desgodetz brought out his great work, "Les Édifices antiques de Rome," dedicated to Colbert, and in August of that year he was awarded 2,000 francs "en consideration du livre d'architecture des antiquitez de Rome, qu'il a donné au public." In November, 1682, he received a further payment of 1,000 francs, "sur les desseins qu'il a fait des bastimens de Versailles." I have already referred to the part that may have been taken by Desgodetz in the design and drawings of the Orangery, and suggest that the latter payment and the appoint-

[1] "Comptes," i, 478. He received payments of 140 and 200 francs.

[2] "Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie d'Architecture."

[3] The entry in that year is "pour ses gages de 1682 1,200 francs." The salary seems to have begun with 1,800 francs in 1680, from 1681 to 1685 it dropped to 1,200. In 1686 it was raised again to 1,800 francs, and in 1690 it appears to have risen to 2,400 francs ("Comptes," iii, 493). Expenses were allowed, and occasionally gratifications. In 1684 Desgodetz was paid 180 francs for journeys, and 300 francs "par gratification."

ment at Chambord may really represent his reward for that work. Desgodetz presented a copy of his book to the Academy, who acknowledged its receipt, but paid no further attention to it for the next twelve years, and Desgodetz's early relations to the Academy are obscure. In 1682 he is described as "agregè de cette Académie"—what this means does not appear. It did not carry with it the right to attend the meetings of the Academy, as Desgodetz only obtained that in December, 1694, on direct nomination by the King.[1] Yet it appears from his statement in the preface to the "Edifices antiques" (1682) that Desgodetz in 1672 obtained permission to attend the Conferences: "J'obtins en 1672, la permission d'être présent à ses conferences," that he did so for two years, and that at the end of 1674, "Je fus envoyé à Rome avec les Académiciens que le Roi y entretient pour étudier l'architecture, la peinture et la sculpture."

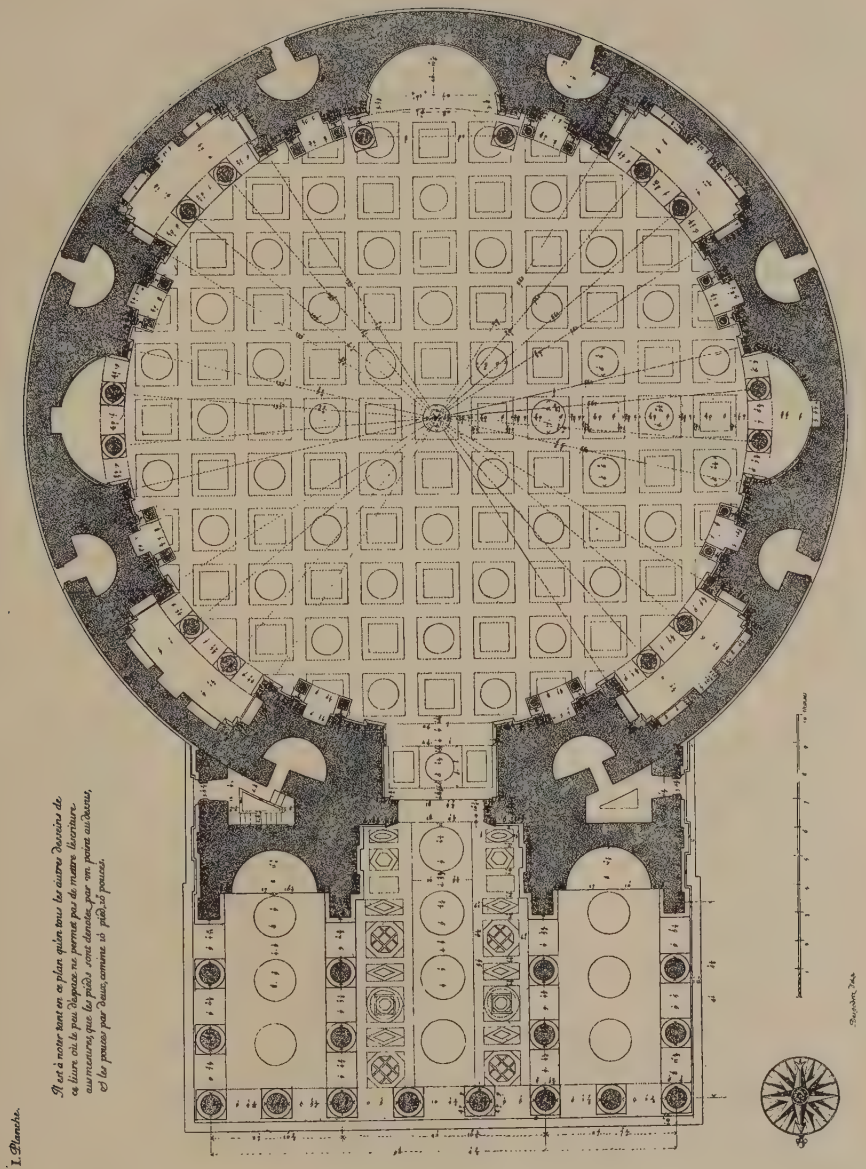
In 1694 Desgodetz was appointed "Contrôleur à Paris" at a salary of 3,000 francs per annum, and a tailor was dispossessed of his lease in order that Desgodetz might have his house.[2] He held this appointment, together with that of Contrôleur of Chambord, and after 1698 with that of architecte du Roi.[3] The number of offices these architects managed to combine is astonishing, and after Mansart's succession to the *Surintendance* in 1699, there seems to have been a rise in the salaries of the building officials all round. The funds were entirely in his hands, and having plunged them deep in the treasury chest for his own purpose, he conciliated his colleagues by a generous disposal of what was left.

In 1698 Desgodetz was nominated a member of the Academy in succession to D'Orbay who had died the year before "regretté de toute la Compagnie," and in the reconstruction of that body in 1699, Desgodetz appears in the second class, but was ultimately promoted to the first class, and in 1714 became Professor of Architecture to the Academy in succession to De La Hire, and one of the most constant of its members. In 1711 he appears in the Comptes as "Contrôleur général des dits Bâtiments" (du Roi) at a salary of 4,000 francs per annum. Bauchal says that from 1717 to 1726 he was architect of the Collège de Beauvais. He died in 1728.

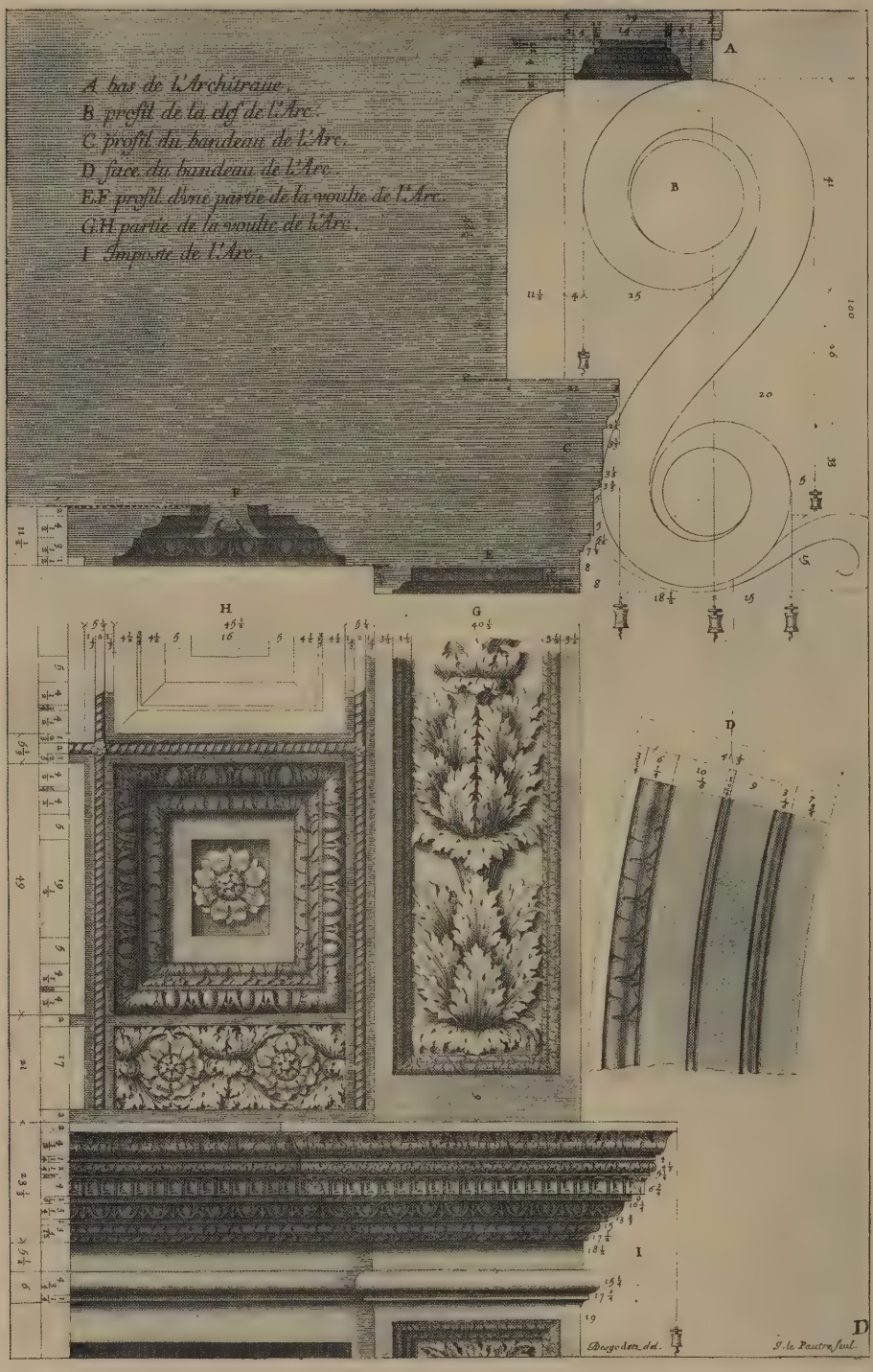
[1] "Procès-Verbaux," ii, 292. On receipt of a letter from Villacerf containing the royal order "Messieurs les architectes du Roi ont reçeu Mons. Des Godetz pour assister à leurs conferences."

[2] "Comptes," iii, 1189.

[3] At a salary of 1,000 francs in 1698, raised in 1699 to 2,000 francs.



PLAN OF THE PANTHEON, ROME. MEASURED AND DRAWN BY A. DESGODETZ (see p. 23 note)
(FROM "LES EDIFICES ANTIQUES DE ROME")



DETAILS OF ARCH OF TITUS. MEASURED AND DRAWN BY DESGODETZ, ENGRAVED BY P. LE PAUTRE (see p. 24 note)

With the possible exception of the Orangery at Versailles and Bauchal's statement, I can find no other record of any architectural work by Desgodetz, and this is the more remarkable in view of the brilliant promise of his work as a draughtsman. The fact was that, as Daviler had found, there was little chance for anyone in Paris who was not related in some way or another to Jules Hardouin Mansart, and it is impossible to estimate the loss to French architecture due to the regime of that prodigious person. Desgodetz had to devote himself to academical work, and after his election he took an active part in the discussions of the Academy which appears to have accepted him as the leading authority on all details of classical architecture. The Procès-Verbaux after 1700 are largely occupied with discussions of his proposals, usually in opposition to those of Bullet. Desgodetz hoped to standardize architecture by the establishment of definite formulae for all its details. In dealing with cornices for rooms, for example, his aim was "chercher à se prescrire des règles."[1] He prepared memoirs and drawings on vaulting and domes, a course of lectures on geometry and stereotomy,[2] and in 1701-2 made detailed drawings of the five orders which the Academy accepted subject to their approval by Mansart, and no doubt intended as a standard set not only for the schools, but also for practising architects. Mansart actually made some alterations, but in 1702 handed the whole thing over to De Cotte who had just been appointed Director of the Academy.

There can be little doubt that Desgodetz knew more about the details of Roman architecture than Mansart, De Cotte and the whole Academy of Architecture put together. "Les Édifices antiques de Rome" was a most remarkable work in every way, not only in the immense labour it must have entailed, but in its consummate accomplishment. When Desgodetz made these drawings he was only about twenty-two, and the book was published before he was thirty. Yet I doubt if there has ever been a finer collection of measured drawings. In his preface Desgodetz says that he was induced to undertake it for his own instruction by the differences in measurements to be found in various authorities, but that on his return to Paris the Academy informed Colbert of his drawings, and the latter instructed him to complete the drawings and had them engraved by the Royal engravers[3] at

[1] "Procès-Verbaux," iii, 337 (1710). [2] *Ibid.*, iii, 179.

[3] De Chastillon, De la Boissier, Le Clerc, Le Pautre, and others. The engravings are of extraordinary delicacy and clearness. The plan of the Pantheon and the details of the entablature of the Campo Vaccino (p. 129) of the Frontispiece of Nero (p. 149)

CHAPTER XVIII

Mansart's Staff: L'Assurance, Le Roux, and Audry

THE phase of architecture which is most typical of the reign of Louis XIV came to an end a quarter of a century before his death. The year 1690 marks approximately the closing down of the immense building enterprise of the ten preceding years, and though the buildings on hand were slowly and laboriously completed, no important fresh work was undertaken after that date. J. H. Mansart was occupied with his affairs and the far-reaching responsibilities of his post as *Surintendant*, and it is doubtful if he took any active part in design during the latter years of the reign. He left it to the able staff which he had collected at the expense of the State, and as at one time or another all the most important buildings of the time passed through Mansart's office, these men had a unique opportunity not only of exercising their own powers of design, but of acquainting themselves with the special conditions of monumental design, and the all-important question of scale. It by no means follows that because an architect has been successful with buildings of moderate size, he will be equally successful with buildings on a great scale. Each scale has its own peculiar difficulties, and the constant failures in scale of large buildings is due to want of experience quite as much as to want of ability in design. Errard failed badly in the church of the Assumption; so did Le Vau at the Collège des Quatre Nations, and fine as was Perrault's design for the Louvre in itself, from the point of view of the scale of the existing building he merely added one more failure to the long series of experiments at the Louvre. Mansart's staff enjoyed a succession of unrivalled chances of large design. They must have formed almost a school of their own, and in this way initiated that great tradition of civil architecture in which the French have been supreme since the end of the seventeenth century. Most of them attained consider-

able distinction in the next generation. De Cotte, L'Assurance, and Boffrand were accomplished architects, and Mansart, though unfair and unscrupulous, was a good judge of ability, and seldom made mistakes in the choice of his staff.

The entries in the "Comptes" are highly suggestive on this point. When Mansart began Clagny in 1675 he had only one clerk or draughtsman, Cauchy or Cochery, at a salary of 600 francs per annum. In 1679 Cauchy was at work on the stables of the Grande Écurie at Versailles.[1] In 1683 he appears among the "officiers des Bastimens" as "designateur" at a salary of 1,200 francs. In 1685 he is joined by Augustin Charles Daviler, "autre dessinateur," at 1,200 francs, and by Pierre Cailleteau dit L'Assurance, "dessinateur," at the same salary, which I take to be equivalent to from £250 to £300 a year. In 1687 Boffrand, "dessinateur," then twenty years of age, was taken on by Mansart at a salary of 60 francs a month, "a dessigner les plants et profils des bastimens de la Place Vendôme et du Commun des Capucines."[2] Daviler, as I have shown, gave up his post in disgust in 1690, but the others continued in Mansart's employment, and it must be admitted that, with the exception of Daviler, Mansart looked after his men, for they were all in due course promoted to posts of honour and emolument. Even poor old Cauchy,[3] the earliest of his draughtsmen, who had worked at the same salary for some twenty years, was rewarded in 1700 with an Inspectorship at Meudon at 1,800 francs per annum, and in 1710 with an Inspectorship in Paris at the same salary, and finally arrived at the dignity of the second class of membership in the Academy of Architecture. After Mansart became *Surintendant* all these posts were at his appointment, and he duly handed them out to his old employées. Mansart was surely most fortunate of men, not only did he pay himself a gigantic salary, but his staff was found for him by the State, and he was able to reward them by various appointments at the State expense, a singular contrast with Wren, whose official salary as Surveyor was £300 a year, and who was deprived of even that in the latter years of his life.

"Pierre Cailleteau dit L'Assurance," as he is described in the accounts, was, I believe, one of the ablest architects of the reign of Louis XIV, though Blondel had a higher opinion of Bullet. Little,

[1] "Comptes," i, 1180. [2] *Ibid.*, ii, 1272.

[3] Besides Cauchy the draughtsman, a Cauchy appears in the "Comptes" as a mason contractor, and Herluison mentions a "Pierre Cauchy" master painter and bourgeois of Paris who died in 1687, aged about fifty.

however, is known of him or his work. A certain L'Assurance appears in the "Comptes" as having been employed as "appareilleur" at Clagny and Marly in 1679 and 1681, and it appears that his business as "appareilleur" at Clagny was "la taille et posage de la vaulte de la chapelle." There is no evidence to show whether this was a relation of Pierre Cailleteau or Cailleteau himself, as there was nothing inherently improbable in a skilled foreman mason being a draughtsman, but he is first mentioned in the "Comptes" as "dessinateur" in 1685. It appears that he was at once employed on Mansart's Church of the Invalides. In 1695 he was paid the balance of a sum of 5,300 francs due to him for work at the church from November 1685 to March 1689, and he also received the balance due to him as draughtsman for the last nine months of 1695, at a rate of 2,200 francs per annum, though it seems that this may have been to compensate for the reduction of his salary to 700 francs in the disastrous year of 1694, when payments to the Academy were suspended and the Treasury was almost empty. The "Comptes" are not always clear after Colbert's death, and still less so under the *Surintendance* of Mansart, when charges were sometimes lumped together anyhow.

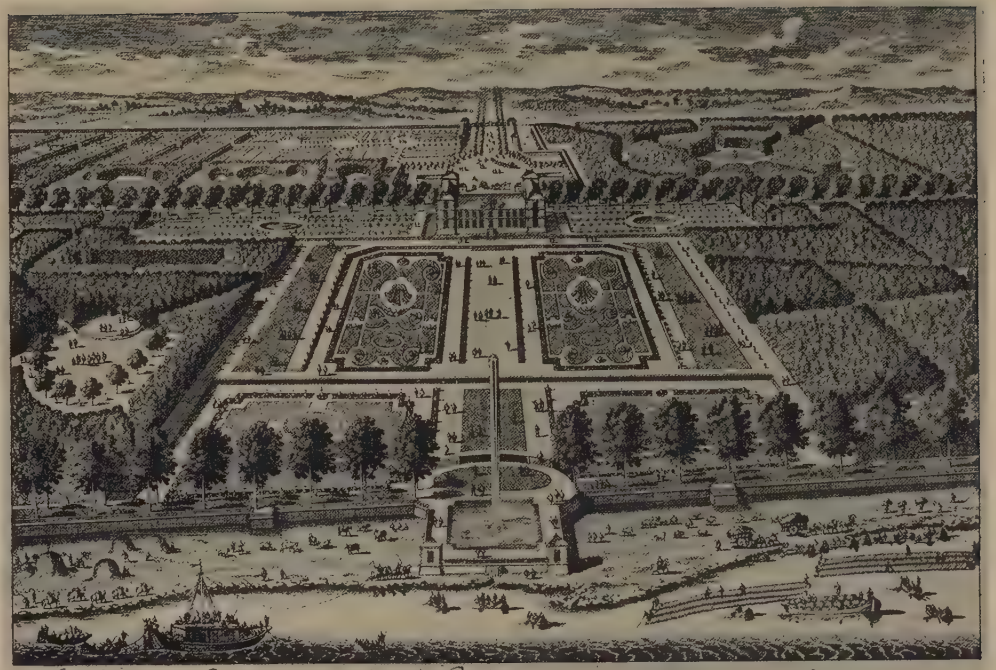
Mansart seems to have recognized the services of L'Assurance by raising his salary to 3,000 francs in 1699 and to 5,000 francs in 1700.[1] The "architecte sous clef," as Saint-Simon called him, may have become restive, for from 1699 onwards his progress was very rapid. In 1700 he is officially described as "architecte du Roi et dessinateur"; in 1702 as "architecte employé dans ladite église des Invalides," at a salary of 1,000 francs,[2] and in 1703, in addition to these increases of salary, he was granted an allowance for the lodgement of himself and his staff. In 1709 he appears among the Academicians in receipt of the usual fees for attendance at the Academy Conferences.[3]

From these dates it would appear that down to the year 1700 L'Assurance was continually employed on Mansart's buildings, and more particularly on the Church of the Invalides; and it is probable that that building owes the consummate finish of its architectural detail

[1] Increased to about 6,500 in 1708. "Comptes," v, 282, but reduced to 4,750 in 1715.

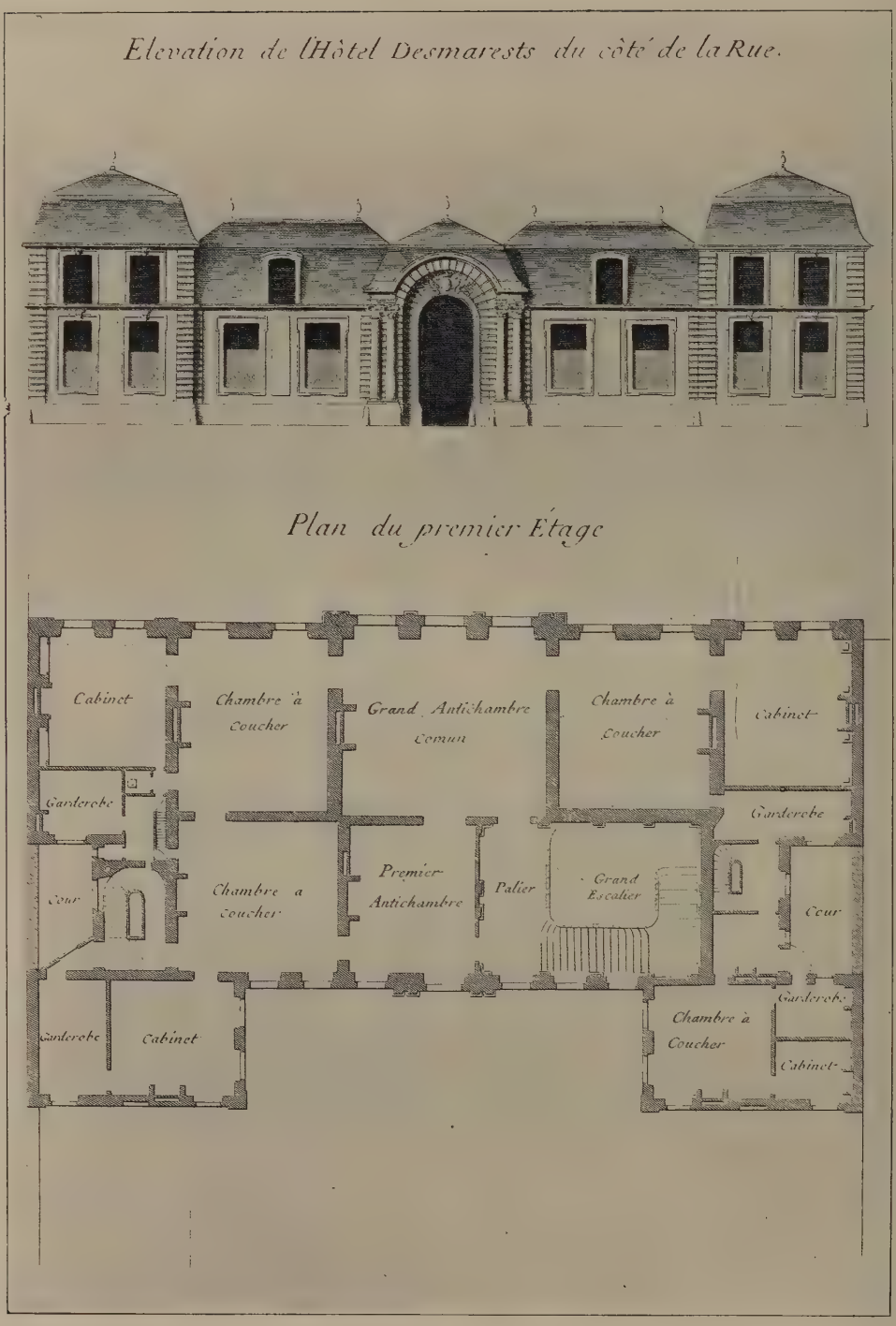
[2] Increased to 2,000 in 1707.

[3] "Comptes," v, 247. The names given are De Cotte, Bullet, de l'Isle, Gabriel, Gobert, Lambert, Le Maistre, De L'Espine, L'Assurance, Bruand (the younger), De la Hire, Félibien (Secretary), et Abbé Prévost, architects. Who this "Abbé Prévost" was does not appear. The famous author of "Manon Lescaut" was born in 1697, and could hardly have been an academician at the age of twelve.


Le chateau de Petit Bourg situé sur le chemin de fontaine-bleau. appartenant a Mgr le duc Dantin.
A Paris chez I. Mariette aux colonnes d'Hercules.

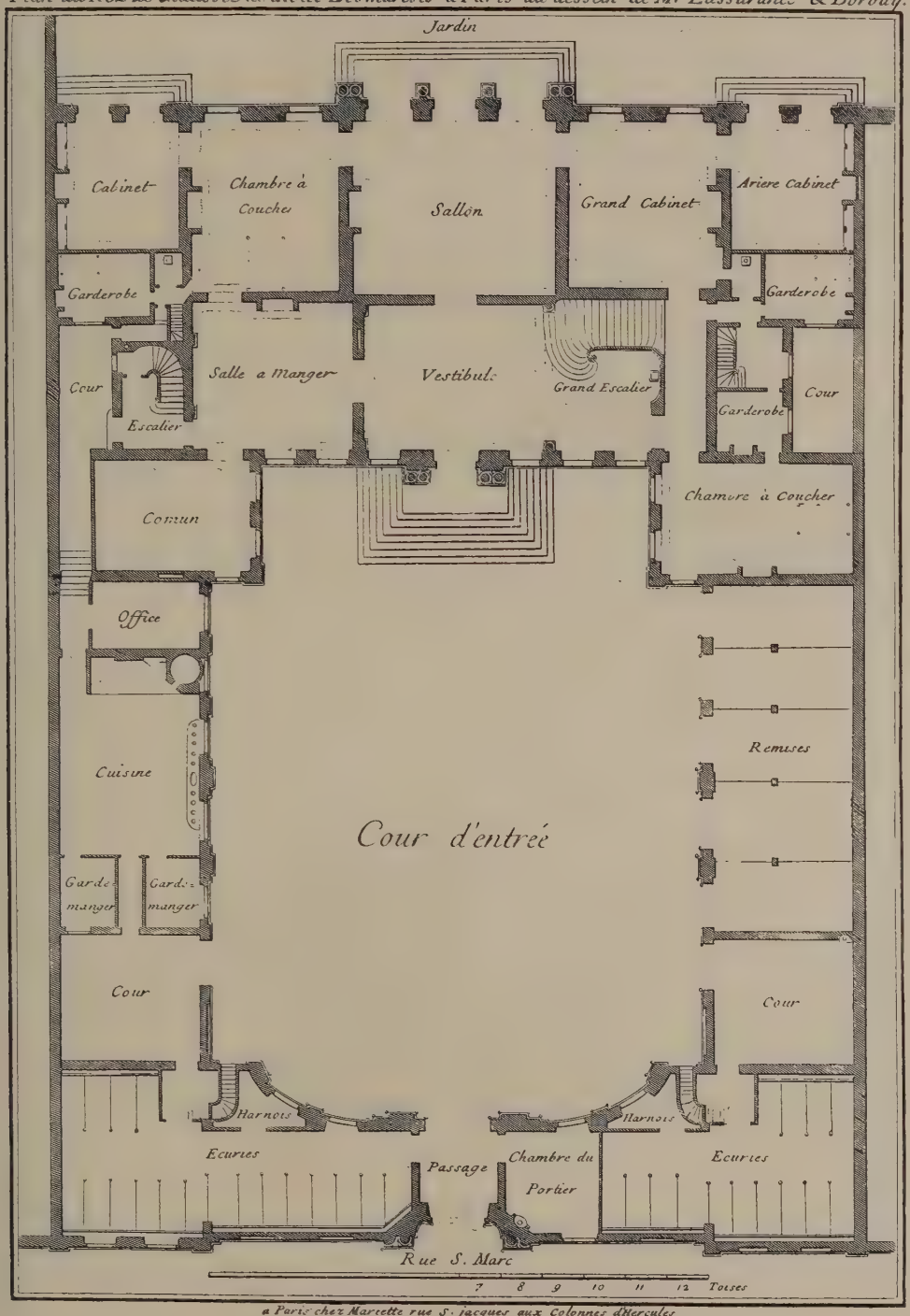
[Perelle

CHÂTEAU DE PETIT BOURG FOR THE DUC D'ANTIN. L'ASSURANCE, THE ELDER (see p. 29 note)



ELEVATION TO STREET AND FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF HOUSE
HÔTEL DESMARES, L'ASSURANCE AND D'ORBAY (THE YOUNGER)

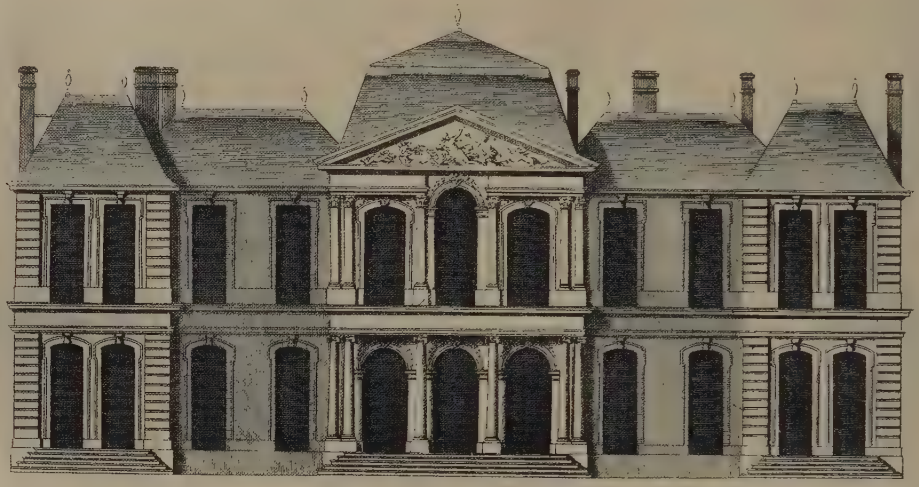
Plan au Rez de chausses de l'Hôtel Desmarests à Paris du dessein de M.r Lassurance & Dorbay.



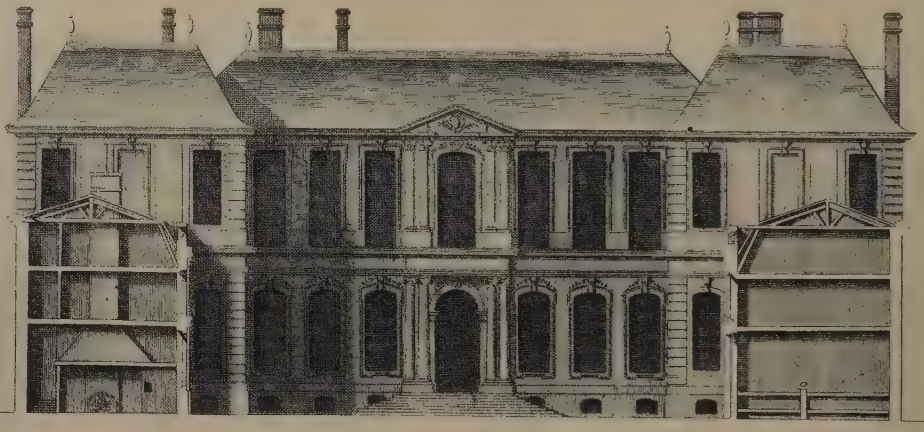
GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DESMARES. L'ASSURANCE AND D'ORBAY

Elevation de la façade du côté du jardin



Elevation de la façade de l'Hôtel Desmarests du côté de la cour



ELEVATIONS

HÔTEL DESMARES. L'ASSURANCE AND D'ORBAY (p. 29 note)

to his hand and supervision, as well as to the admirable artists that were employed on its sculpture. These men were first-rate technicians, and on this point of detail the craftsmanship of the Invalides, at any rate in its masonry, is superior to that of St. Paul's Cathedral, with the superiority not only of the inimitable workmanship of the French masons and carvers, but of a more complete command of the resources of classical detail, for although St. Paul's is a work of astonishing genius, there are shortcomings in execution which Wren could have avoided had he possessed the intimate familiarity with classical architecture of such men as L'Assurance and even of J. H. Mansart. J. F. Blondel,[1] who had the highest admiration for Jules Hardouin Mansart, "ce grande architecte," "cet habile homme," makes no reference to L'Assurance's share in the work, and says of the Invalides, "on doit regarder ce monument comme l'ouvrage le plus parfait pour la distribution, la decoration, et la construction" of any of the buildings erected in the reign of Louis XIV. Mansart, no doubt, made the general design embodied in the model, but I am convinced that to L'Assurance, who was in charge of the work on the spot, from its first start to its completion, we owe its admirable interpretation in actual building.

After 1700 L'Assurance seems to have begun practice on his own account, and appears to have been very successful. He became "Contrôleur" at Marly, and a Chevalier of the Order of S. Michael, and between 1700 and his death in 1723 he designed several of the most important houses in Paris; among them the Hôtels de Rotelin, de Roquelaure, de Bethune, de Maison and d'Auvergne, of which Blondel thought so well that he included all of them in his "Architecture Française," pointing out their defects with his accustomed candour. Blondel[2] says of him: "C'est de tous nos architectes Français, celui qui a le plus bâti en Paris," and in addition to those already named he mentions the Hôtels de Montbason, de Marais, de Noailles, and the Château de Petit Bourg. He carried on part of the work at the Palais Bourbon, and completed D'Orbay's design for the Hôtel Desmares.[3] His earliest independent work seems to have been the Hôtel de Rotelin in the Rue de Grenelle, 1700, afterwards known as the Hôtel de

[1] "Arch. Franc.," i, 200. [2] *Ibid.*, 233.

[3] Piganiol de la Force ("Desc. de Paris," iii, 153) says that this house, in the Rue S. Marc was built in 1704 for Thomas Rivié, from the designs of L'Assurance, and that it came into the hands of Nicholas Dèsmares, Controller General of Finances, in 1711. "Les dedans, en sont beaux et commodes, mais la décoration extérieure fait pitié a ceux qui se connoissent en architecture." I give the elevations and a view of the Château of Petit Bourg with its fine grounds and a house quite unlike the manner of L'Assurance.

Charolais.[1] The design is rather dull both in plan and elevation. The main entrance was in the centre of the farther end of the *grande cour* (forecourt), with basecourts to right and left, but the whole scheme is crowded, the front of the court is nearly all windows, a serious fault in a façade of this character, and L'Assurance indulged freely in the "licence toujours viceuse" of breaking his cornices in order to carry up the segmental heads of his openings, a practice against all the teaching of the Academy, and severely reprobated by Blondel.[2] The garden front is much more satisfactory, except that the end windows of the *avant-corps* come too near to the angles, and the rustications are too narrow. The influence of his old master[3] is evident in the Ionic order of the ground floor, with semicircular openings between, and the attic storey of the centre-piece in the garden front. L'Assurance was certainly an accomplished designer, but his real originality seems to me to have shown itself most in his plans. He broke away from the typical plan of a town house, which I have described in a previous chapter, and varied his plans to suit the special conditions of sites and the individual wishes of the owner. The Hôtel de Bethune,[4] built early in the eighteenth century, was a characteristic example. As a rule the sites of town houses in Paris were relatively narrow in the front, but extended a long way back, so that there was room for the *grande cour* and a basecourt, the main house and a garden at the back, the principal rooms invariably looking out on to the garden. The site of the Hôtel de Bethune in the Rue S. Dominique was very shallow, but extended for some distance laterally and parallel to the street. L'Assurance accepted the site as it stood, and though he adhered to the invariable plan of the *grande cour*, with the entrance at its farther end, instead of putting the main building at the farther end he provided a large antechamber giving access to the range of principal rooms to the left, planned *en suite* at right angles to the street, and facing to the gardens, which ran back from this front parallel to the street. The site to the right of the forecourt was occupied by the kitchen and offices,

[1] It was bought by Mademoiselle de Charolais (Louise Anne de Bourbon) later in the century and a good deal altered. See F. Contet, "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," i, 19, 21. It is now the Hôtel du Ministère de Commerce et de l'Industrie.

[2] The entrance from the street to the *grande cour* of the Hôtel de Bethune was a peculiarly flagrant example, but the standing instance of this offence against both taste and reason is Bruant's entrance to the Invalides.

[3] J. H. Mansart. L'Assurance used this motive again at the Hôtel de Bethune.

[4] "Emporté par le percement de Boulevard S. Germain en 1876" (Gaudet et Pascal, notes to Blondel's "Arch. Franç.").

basecourt and stables. The plan was, in Blondel's words, "fort ingénieuse." The garden front was in one storey, and this explains the absence of a main staircase, a mere accommodation stairs leading to two or three rooms on the first floor over the central block; there was, of course, no object in providing a grand staircase when all the principal rooms were on the ground floor. In the early part of the eighteenth century the tendency was to keep the buildings as low as possible, and instances occur in Blondel's collection of town houses, consisting of only a basement partly above ground and a ground floor. Later on it was sometimes found necessary to revert to the grand staircase, and an instance of this occurred in the Hôtel d'Auvergne, built from the designs of L'Assurance in 1708. He had provided here a vestibule on the ground floor unusually large for the size of the house, and at the back of this an insignificant staircase with steps some 4 feet 6 inches wide to the first floor. This did well enough for the Comte d'Auvergne, Colonel-General of the Light Cavalry of France, who, provided he got room enough to harangue his officers, and plenty of stabling for his horses, was probably satisfied. Accordingly, his architect gave him a very large ante-chamber, leading to a *salle de compagnie*, a *chambre de parade*, and finally to the great man's Cabinet, and round the *basse-cour* he provided stabling for thirty-five horses; but after the house was built, "il s'est trouvé occupé par des personnes de la première consideration." The Cardinal d'Auvergne found the modest establishment of his father, the Colonel of Light Horse, inadequate for his receptions, and called in Servandoni, who pulled down the existing staircase and formed "un des plus magnifiques escaliers qui se voient en Paris" in a very skilful manner, "sans nuire a la bâtisse ni diminuer la basse-cour."[1] The Hôtel de Maison, next door to the Hôtel d'Auvergne, appears to have been built in the same year as the latter (1708), and L'Assurance used the one building to help the other by running his design through on the garden side and using the end half of the façade of the Hôtel d'Auvergne to balance the end wing of the Hôtel de Maison. The *grande cour* of the Hôtel de Maison is nearly square (about 88 feet by 85 feet), with a large basecourt and stabling for thirty-four horses to the left. On the left of the entrance vestibule was the grand staircase, and beyond this was the wing already mentioned, quite unsymmetrical in plan, but restored to symmetry in elevation by the corresponding façade of the Hôtel d'Auvergne next door. The *salle-à-manger* at the Hôtel de Maison, a wretched room (about

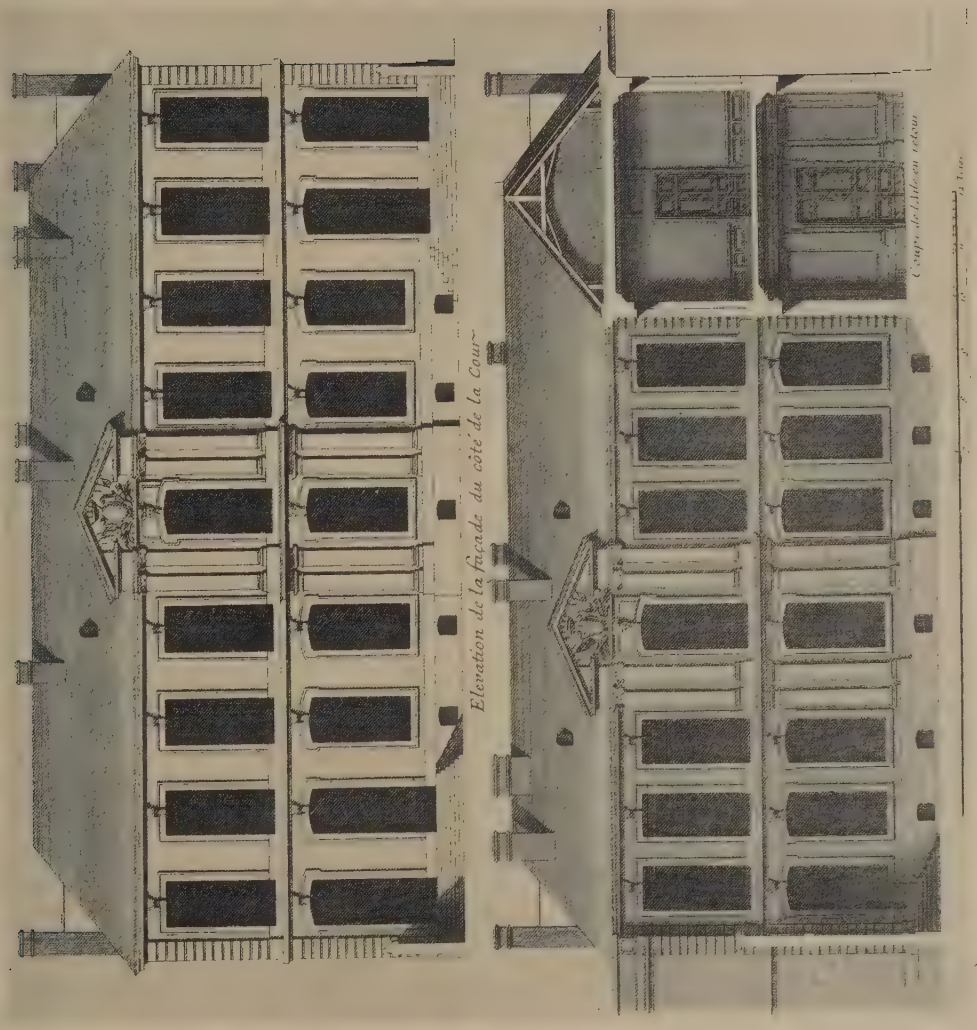
[1] Blondel, i, 261.

22 feet by 12 feet) was tucked away behind the main stairs with windows looking out on to the basecourt. It is usual in modern houses to give the dining-room a good aspect and to treat it with consideration as an important room. French architects of the early part of the eighteenth century seem to have been content to place it almost anywhere, provided it was accessible from the main rooms, but they were at no pains to give it any tolerable outlook or even adequate light. Blondel says that at the Hôtel de Maison it was placed too near the basecourt, badly lit and difficult of access from the kitchen and offices, grave faults, as he points out, "le service des domestiques ne pouvant être trop commode." It could be reached under cover from the kitchen without passing through open courts, entrance halls, or ante-chambers, but on the other hand there was no way of getting to it for the family, except through a bedroom, or through the entrance vestibule under the grand staircase, along a corridor 3 feet wide and into a small lobby, the two latter pitch dark. L'Assurance had arrived at the idea of separate passages, but domestic planning was still somewhat rudimentary. The servants were housed above the thirty-four horses. Blondel gives a plan of the alterations made to this house by Mouret about the middle of the eighteenth century, and it is of considerable interest as showing the advance in planning. Mouret shifted the grand staircase to the right of the entrance hall, and formed an excellent dining-room in place of it to the left of the entrance, with good light and direct and convenient access both for the family and for the servants. He also added a range of buildings on the garden front, in which for the first time a bathroom appears. Blondel calls attention to the "enfilade" through ten rooms, giving a total length of 222 feet, but does not appear to have noted that the enfilade ended up with the bathroom.[1]

The Hôtel de Roquelaure[2] was the last work of L'Assurance. It was begun in 1722 on an irregular and awkward site in the Rue S. Dominique. The house was, as usual, set back at the farther end of a fine courtyard (88 feet by 78 feet) exclusive of the quadrant curves next the entrance. The *basse-cour* was away to the left. The entrance, instead of being as usual in the centre of the building, was double, one on each side, above a broad flight of steps leading up to vestibules, from which access was given to ante-chambers communicating with the principal rooms of the house. There was no grand staircase, and, as

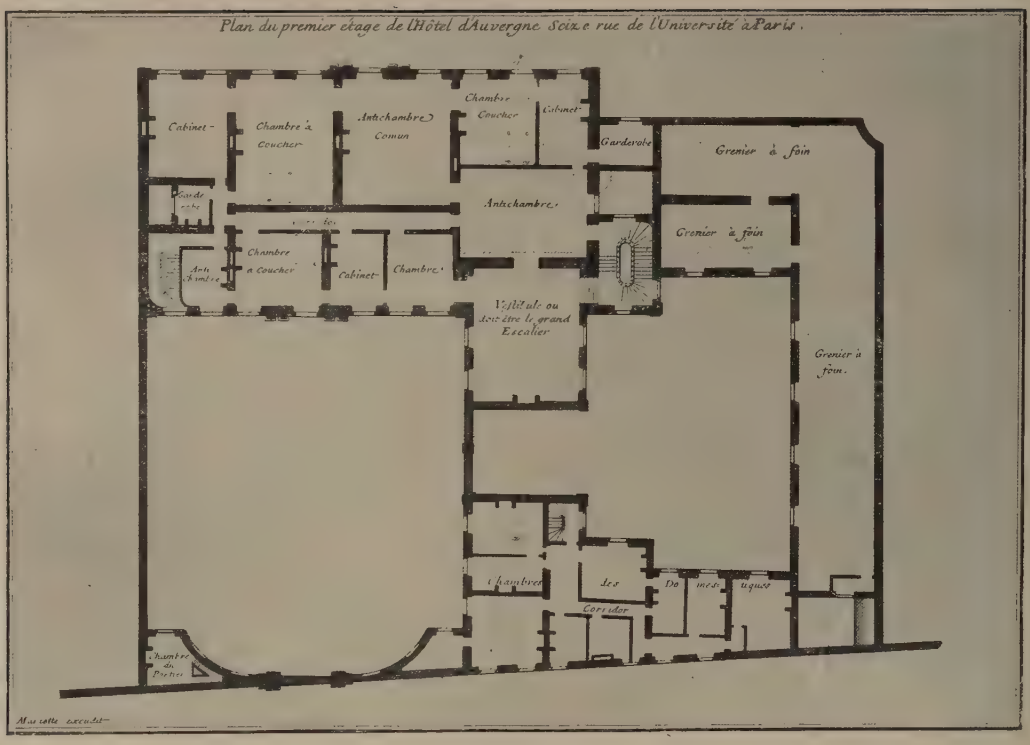
[1] The Hôtel de Maison or Soyecourt is No. 47 Rue d'Université. The Hôtel d'Auvergne no longer exists (Gaudet et Pascal).

[2] No. 246, Boulevard S. Germain, now le Ministère des Travaux Publiques.

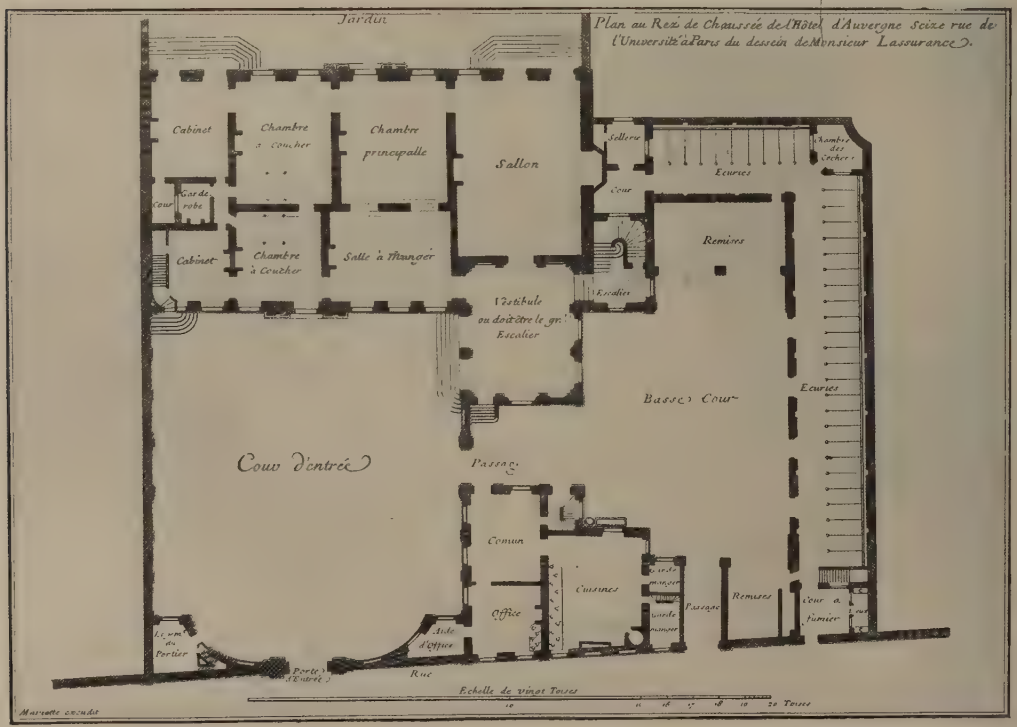


ELEVATION TO GARDEN (ABOVE) ELEVATION TO FORECOURT AND SECTION (BELOW)

HÔTEL D'AUVERGNE. BY L'ASSURANCE (see p. 31)

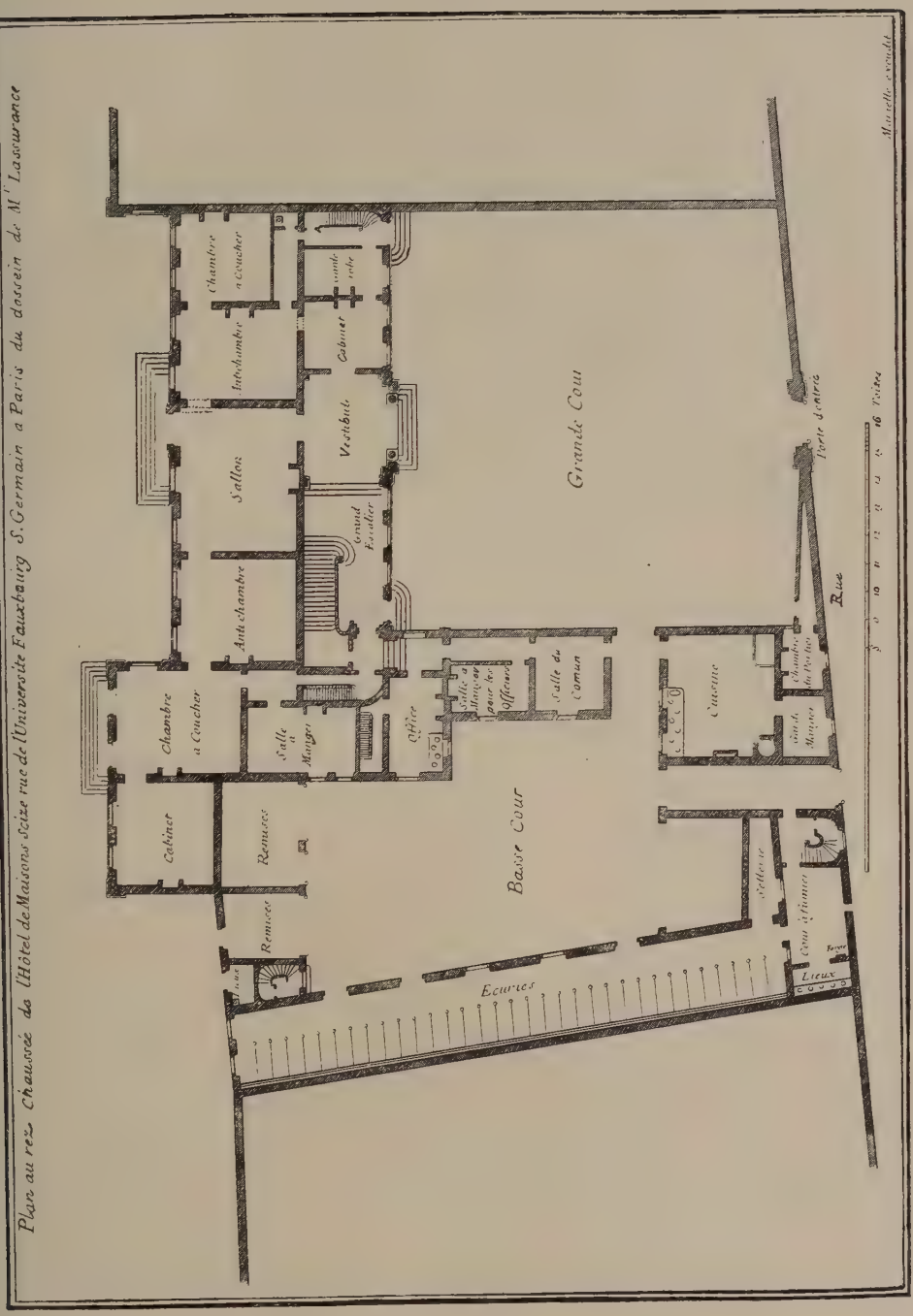


FIRST FLOOR PLAN



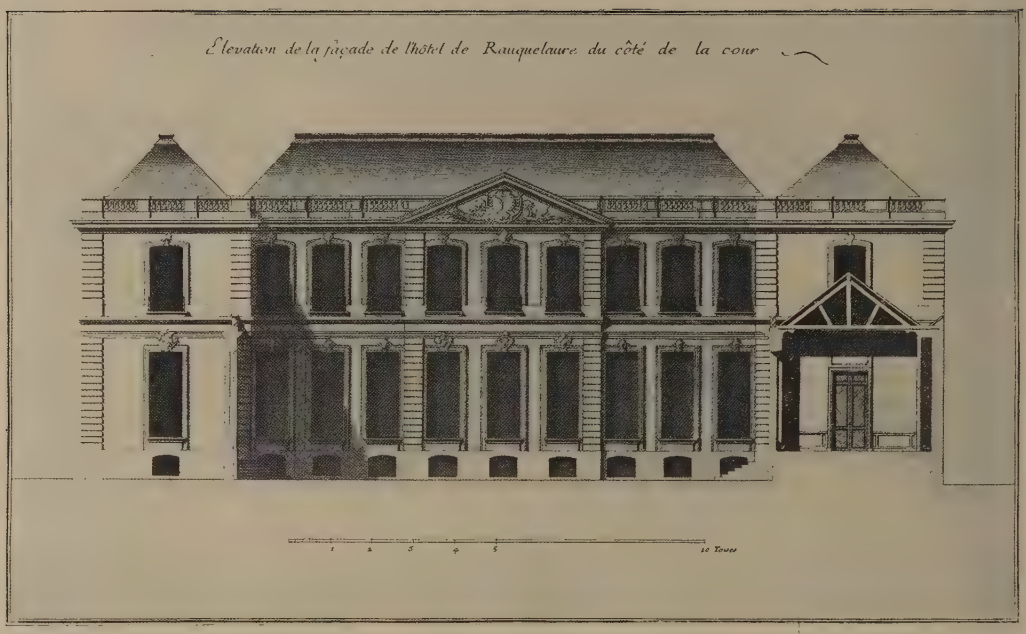
GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL D'AUVERGNE. BY L'ASSURANCE (see p. 31)

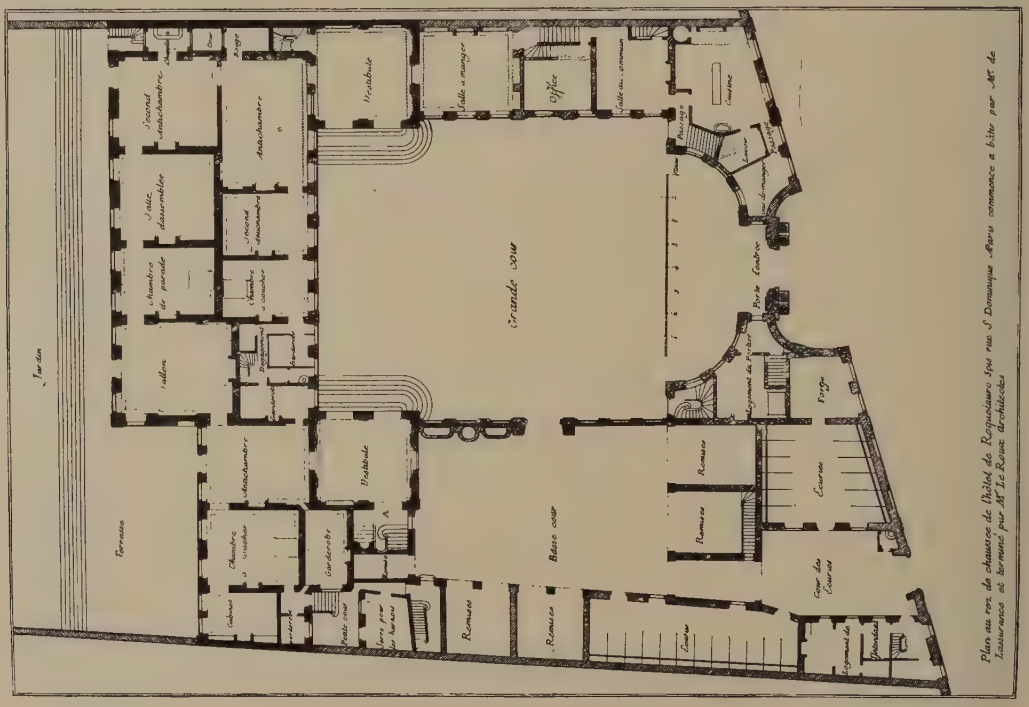


GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE MAISONS. BY L'ASSURANCE (see p. 32)



ELEVATION FROM THE FORECOURT



GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE ROQUELAURE. BY L'ASSURANCE AND LE ROUX (p. 33)

(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, XVI)

usual, the rooms were *en suite* with the doorways enfilading. The main elevation to the court was symmetrical with advanced pavilions on either side, and is the most satisfactory of any of L'Assurance's façades. The orders are not used at all, the building depending for its effect on simple grouping and proportions, and except for the tendency to crowd, noticeable in all this architect's designs, and due to his anxiety to get light at all cost, is a fine straightforward architectural design. L'Assurance had divested himself of the tricks of his earlier manner, and his plans were always clever. His treatment of the garden at the back of the house was a masterly use of the ground,[1] and though Blondel criticizes it severely, the design of the Orangery was excellent. The house was not completed when L'Assurance died in 1723. The *basse-cour*, the sides of the *grande cour*, and the façade to the street, were completed by Le Roux[2] ten years later. Blondel severely criticized the placing of the kitchen in a corner of the forecourt. This, he says, would have been better placed in the basecourt, "leur usage demandant une cour et une communication extérieure qui ne soit pas la même que celle de la principale entrée de l'Hôtel." But had this been done, all dishes would have had to be carried across both basecourt and forecourt to reach the *salle-à-manger*, and the kitchen and offices would have been all among the stables. To modern notions the kitchen of the Hôtel de Roquelaure is as well placed as any in the collection, and Blondel forgot his own dictum, "le service des domestiques ne pouvant être trop commode."

Blondel says that the Palais de Bourbon[3] was begun in 1722 from the design of Giardini, continued by L'Assurance, and after his death by Gabriel and Aubert. As, however, L'Assurance died in 1723, his share in the work must have been quite inconsiderable. On the other hand, he gave the designs of the adjoining building, the Hôtel de Lassay, though these also were carried out after his death by Aubert. Both buildings were designed as one-storey buildings, and they shared stables and lodgings for officers and servants. The design of the Hôtel de Lassay is relatively as severely plain as that of the Hôtel de Bourbon is florid and exuberant, and shows the same advance in design as that

[1] The curious set back in the house on the garden front is attributed by Blondel to a possible older building on the site. "Cet architecte [L'Assurance] étant trop éclairé" to break up his façade in such an unsatisfactory way.

[2] On plan reproduced herewith these are hatched a lighter shade.

[3] Now Chambre des Deputés. The building is very fully illustrated by Blondel ("Arch. Franc.," vol. i, chap. xxiii). The building was begun by the Duchesse de Bourbon in 1720, according to Germain Brice.

which I have already noted in the Hôtel de Roquelaure. The only criticism one could make is the excessive height of the window openings, over three to one, which is not only ugly in itself, but incongruous with the design of the openings in the centre and end Pavilions. Blondel remarks that architects assumed that when they dispensed with the orders they could also dispense with their methods of proportions, but he pleads with justice that this was no excuse for running into the opposite extreme, and disregarding all "vraisemblance" between the component parts of a design. L'Assurance, capable man as he was, was certainly careless in this regard, and gives one the impression of having sometimes failed in artistic self-respect, in too assiduously carrying out the instructions of his clients. He made no stand for points of design, which, as he knew and his clients did not know, were essential to architecture. It was this gradual relaxation of artistic integrity, in which J. H. Mansart had been the most conspicuous offender, that led to the ruin of classical architecture.

Jean Baptiste Le Roux belongs to that large class of architects who, successful enough in their lifetime, are now little more to us than the shadow of a name. Blondel[1] says: "M. Le Roux, un des architectes modernes qui ait été le plus employé de son temps, étoit élève de M. D'Orbay; il avoit beaucoup de génie et excelloit principalement dans le partie de la decoration des appartemens." Blondel says he designed, among others, the Hôtel de Rohan Chabot and the Hôtel de Roquelaure, but he himself informs us that at the Hôtel de Rohan Chabot he designed the decorations only, and at the Hôtel de Roquelaure Le Roux completed the designs of L'Assurance. He was an "architecte du Roi," and died in 1746,[2] aged sixty-nine. His name does not occur in the "Comptes" prior to 1715, though there are others of the name mentioned, and Herluison gives an entry (1698 from S. Benoît) in which Louis Le Roux, "peintre du Roi," is mentioned, a Jean Le Roux, a merchant glover, and another Jean, an engraver, the usual bourgeois connection of the architects of the time. Le Roux became a member of the Academy of Architecture[3] in 1720, and Professor in 1730, as assistant to the younger Bruand, nephew of Liberal. That Le Roux was skilful enough is shown by his additions and altera-

[1] "Arch. Franc.," i, 212.

[2] Blondel says about 1740, but on the same page says that the Duc de Villeroi altered the house of Mdle. Desmares from the design of Le Roux in 1746. See F. Contet, "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," vol. i, pl. 28.

[3] "Archives de l'Art Franc.," i, 421, 424.

tions to the Hôtel de Roquelaure, and to Aubry's design for the house of Mdle. Desmares (afterwards Hôtel de Villeroi in the Rue de Varenne). Aubry's design for Mdle. Desmares provided a small and very simple house on an oblong plan. To this Le Roux added a fine oval *salle-à-manger*, a fresh set of offices, and an additional stable. The oval dining-room at the Hotel de Villeroi, the very complete provision of kitchen and offices in the new wing, and of the bedroom suite on the ground floor of the main building, show the advance in domestic planning since the days of Louis XIV. The kitchen was admirably placed for light and access, and well-lit passages were provided for communication under cover between kitchen and dining rooms, although the two servants' halls were passage rooms. Le Roux's elevations were less satisfactory, the exterior of the oval dining-room was careless and sloppy, lacking "l'étude, le goût, et l'expérience," which Blondel says should shape the work of all good architects. Blondel is scarcely less severe on his façade to the street of the Hôtel de Roquelaure, but, though a little monotonous, it appears to me to be a capable piece of work. Le Roux was a decorator rather than an architect. He published several series of designs, and Destailleur,[1] though he thought him worth studying, summed him up with precision: "Sans principes arrêtés sur son art, architecte à la mode, il cherchait à plaire avant tout; aussi peut on le regarder comme un réflet fidèle du goût de son époque." There was too much of "la mode" altogether in French architecture of the eighteenth century; one generation ahead was the limit of its outlook.

Aubry, like Le Roux, seems to have been a fashionable and successful architect in Paris. "M. Aubry[2] est un architecte de reputation qui a beaucoup fait bâtir a Paris et dont l'expérience lui attire la confiance d'une infinité des grands seigneurs." So Blondel describes him in one of his set formulas.

Aubry designed the Chambre des Comptes of which he was Controller (finished in 1740), the Hôtel de Bouillon, the Hôtel de la Vrillière, and other important houses in Paris. The house which he designed for Mdle. Desmares appears to have been built 1720-30. It was a compact little house with a basecourt, two storeys, and an attic. Instead of placing the grand staircase in a separate apartment, it ascended directly from the entrance hall, giving access only to the first floor, which appears

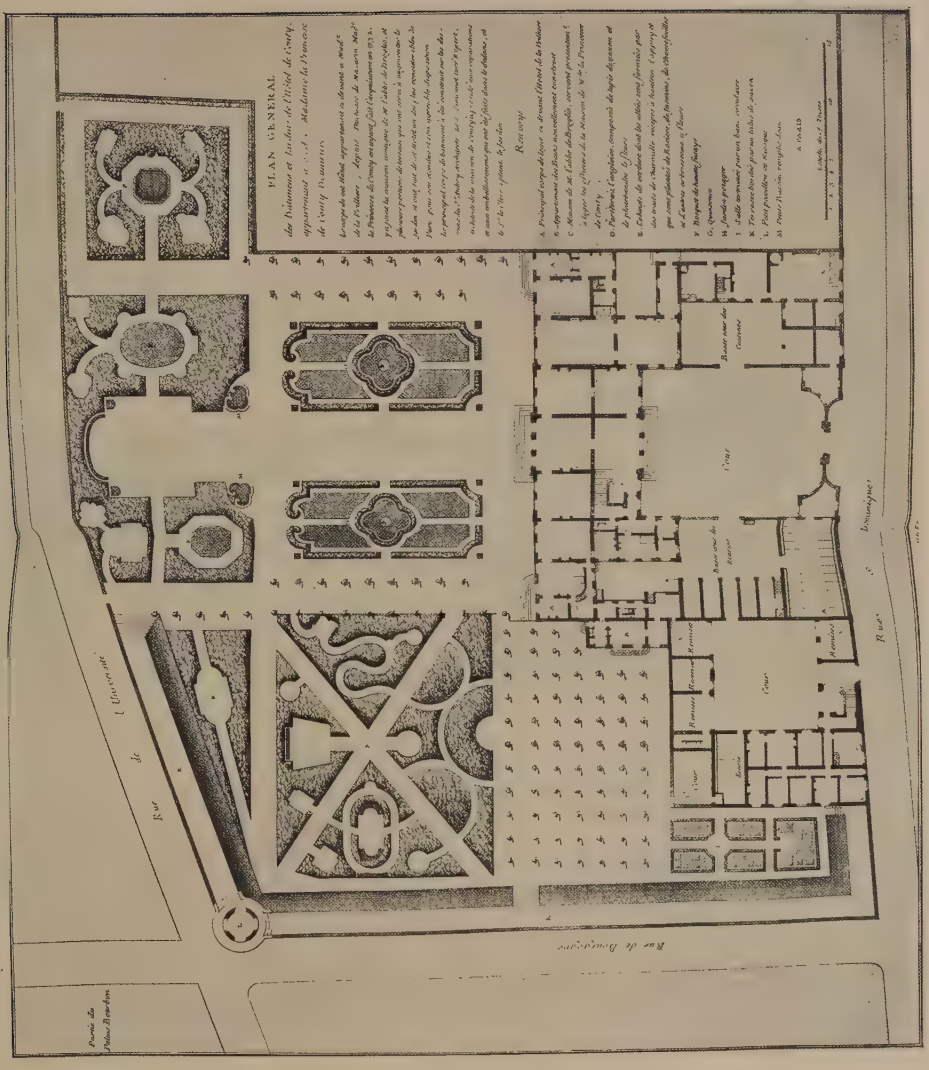
[1] Destailleur, "Notices sur quelques artistes Français," pp. 268-69.
[2] Blondel, "Arch. Franc.," i, 212.

to have been occupied entirely by the mistress of the house.[1] On her death in 1746 the house was bought by the Duc de Villeroi, and altered by Le Roux. The great importance attached to light and air by the French architects in the time of the Regency and early part of the reign of Louis XV is remarkable. They seldom built higher than two storeys and a basement partly above ground, and in Blondel's collection there are examples of buildings of only one storey. The Hôtel de Pompadour by De la Mare was an instance. At the Hôtel de Conty (Rue S. Dominique) Aubry designed the centre block only as a two-storey building, the rest of this considerable house being only one storey high, and there was thus ample light and air in the *grande cour* and the two basecourts placed one on each side of it. An adjoining house on the left-hand side next the street was bought in 1732 by the Princesse de Conty, and the grounds at the back thrown into one, so that there was a large garden at the back with a frontage on two sides to streets.[2] It thus became one of the most considerable houses of the time in Paris, "pour son étendue et son agréable disposition." A certain M. Le Clerc designed the gardens, with "Cabinets de Verdure" of the most idiotic description. The great School founded by Le Nôtre had already failed; the art of garden design was becoming a mere trick, and fell an easy prey to the landscape gardener a few years later. Blondel remarks "en effet, on ne remarque presque plus dans la plupart de nos jardins modernes que des allées tortueuses, des formes captieuses, des découpures, des entortillemens disagréables, sans graces dans les parties, et souvent sans proportions dans les masses; beaucoup de nos architectes voulant se mêler du jardinage sans en avoir les moindres notions." Not only were they ignorant of garden design, in their ridiculous affectation they had lost touch of the "simplicité noble" of Le Nôtre.

At the Hôtel de Conty Aubry again took his main stairs directly out of the entrance hall. The offices were well planned. The kitchen in the south-east corner (marked A on the plan) had its own court

[1] It contained one large bedroom and antechambers, a cabinet and a wardrobe. Christine Antoinette Charlotte Desmares of the "Comédie Française" was a famous actress, born in 1682. She retired from the stage and built this house in 1725. In the Memoirs of De Luynes, xiii, 65, there is an account of her withdrawal to S. Germain-en-Laye with her neighbour Hoguères, a financier, and of her death there twenty years later, a real eighteenth century romance.

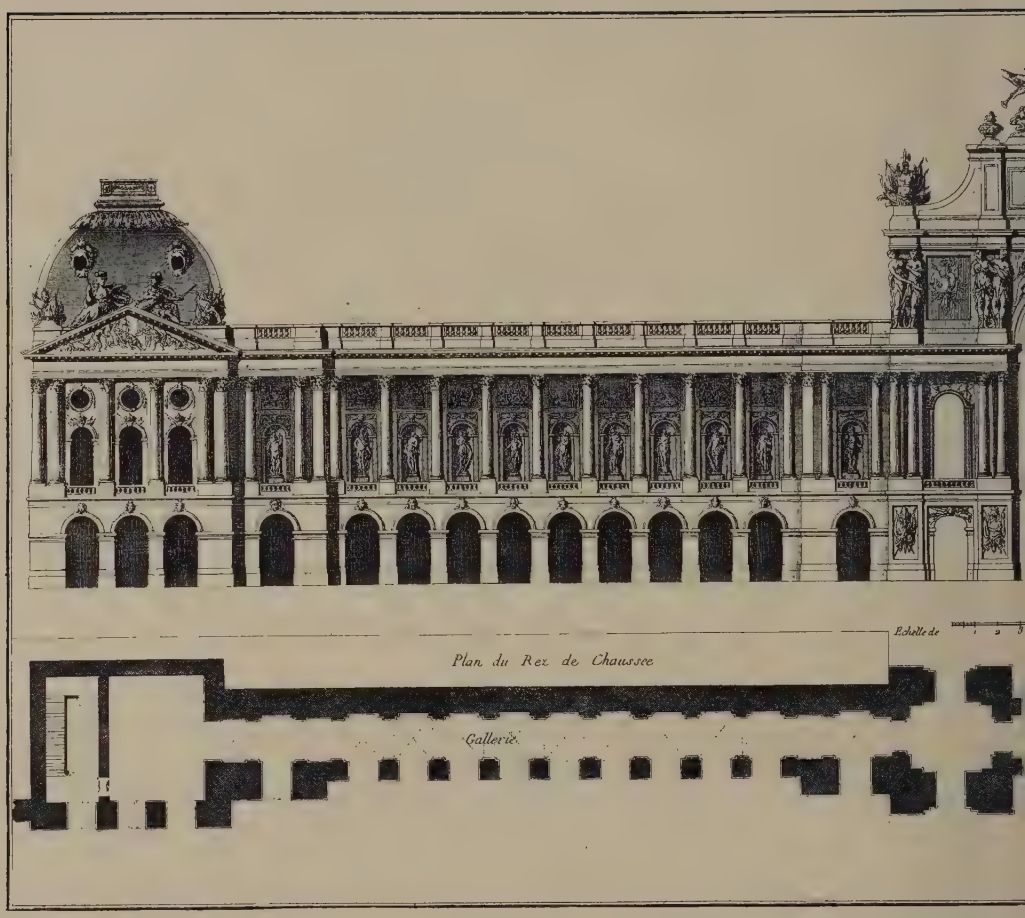
[2] The Rue de l'Université and the Rue de Bourgogne.



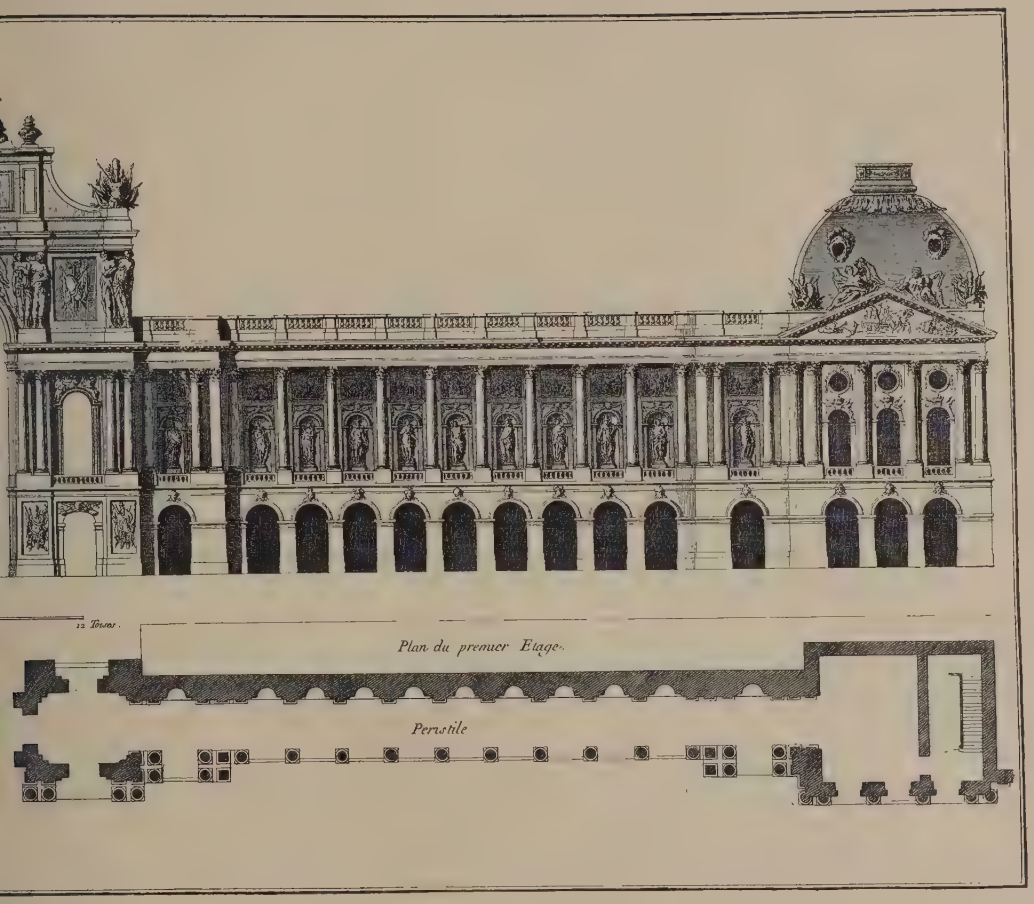
GENERAL PLAN

HÔTEL DE CONTY, PARIS. BY AUBRY (p. 36)

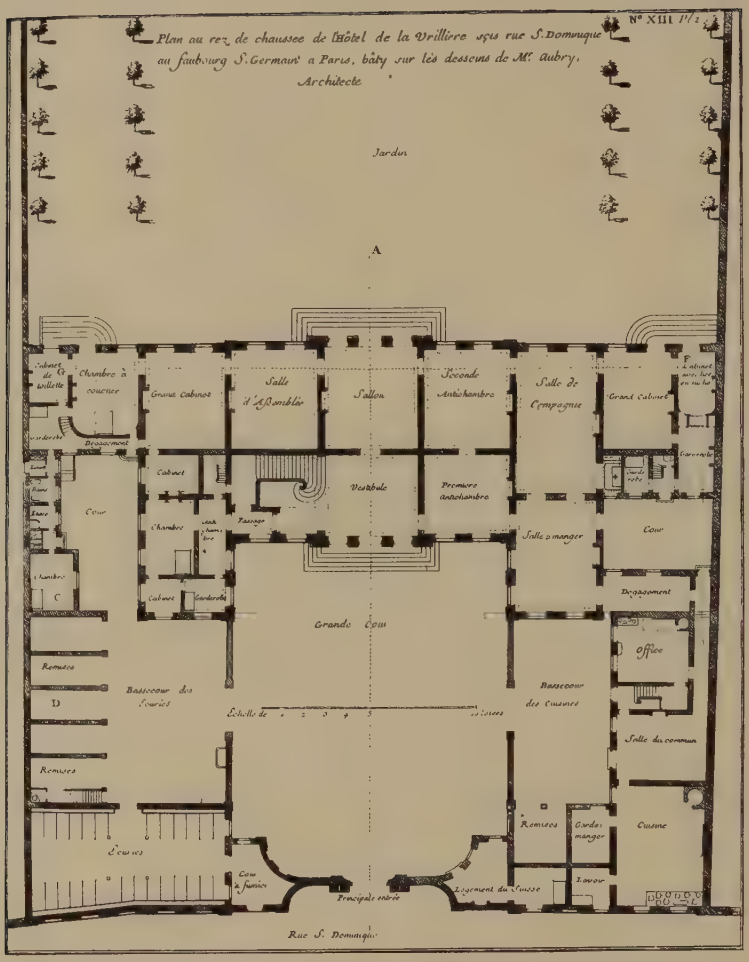
(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE")



DESIGN SUBMITTED BY AUBRY IN THE
(FROM PAT



ON FOR THE PLACE LOUIS XV (see p. 37)
MENS ÉRIGÉS")


Plan au rez de chaussee de l'Hôtel de la Vrilliere scis rue S. Domnique au fauxbourg S. Germain a Paris, bâty sur les desseins de Mr. Aubry, Architecte
Jardin
A
Cour
Grand Cour
Rue S. Dominique

GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE LA VRILLIÈRE. BY AUBRY

(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE")

Note.—This house was built for Mme. de la Vrillière, but sold by her in 1732 to the Princess de Conty, who altered and added to the house. After this date it was known as the Hôtel de Conty.

with easy access from the kitchen to a well-placed *salle-à-manger* (north of the *cour des cuisines*), instead of being placed in a remote corner and mixed up with the stables, as was often done. The stables were placed in a separate court on the opposite side of the *grande cour*. The elevations are reasonable and dignified, though not very interesting, but the plan is one of the best in the whole series, and justifies the claims made by eighteenth century writers in regard to the great advance made by the architects of Louis XV. For the first time comfort and convenience of service were recognized as essential elements in the problem of domestic architecture.

It seems uncertain whether Aubry was an Academician. In 1748 it was proposed to erect a national monument to Louis XV. There was to be a heroic statue, and schemes were invited for a grand Place in Paris in which to set it up. By order of the Director des Bâtiments all the Academician architects competed, and in the list of them given by Patte appears the name of Aubry, who is further described as "Architecte du Roi," and "Inspector Général du Pavé de Paris." Bauchal takes this Aubry to be the Guillot (with Aubry given as Christian name) who appears in the list of Academicians in 1737,[1] and if this Aubry is the same as the Aubry of the Hôtel de Conty, he must have belonged to the generation that succeeded L'Assurance and De Cotte. Aubry, whose design is given by Patte, proposed an immense colonnade opposite to the end of the Pont Royal. In his description, Patte says this design included "toutes les richesses d'architecture." In the centre was to be a huge triumphal arch,[2] much too high and overpowered by its attic storey and trophy; to the right and left were Corinthian colonnades on an arcaded ground storey, and at the ends were pavilions with pediments, and square cupola roofs with figures loose on the pediments, hopelessly out of scale with those of the reliefs in the tympana. The whole thing is a jumble of motives from Perrault and Le Vau, and shows little sense of monumental design. In the result the work was placed in the hands of A. J. Gabriel, who designed the Place Louis XV, now the Place de la Concorde. I shall return to this

[1] Bauchal says he was born in 1703, in which case he would have been about seventeen when he designed the house of Mdle. Desmares, and that he died in 1771. In the list of Academicians given in the "Archives de l'Art Franc.," Aubry is given as Christian name to Guillot, of whom I find nothing further. Bauchal has treated Aubry Guillot as Guillot Aubry.

[2] The arch was to be 36 ft. wide by 78 ft. to the soffit, the height from ground line to the top of the trophy was to be 140 ft.

in a later chapter. Le Roux and Aubry[1] were typical of the successful architects of the first half of the eighteenth century. Capable men of affairs, skilful planners and competent designers, the obedient servants of the corrupt but cheerful society of the time, they were men without ideals or convictions. It took French architects two generations to recover from the deadly example of Jules Hardouin Mansart.

[1] For convenience of description of their work I have taken Le Roux and more particularly Aubry out of their chronological order. Aubry really belongs to the middle period of the eighteenth century, and was almost a contemporary of A. J. Gabriel.

CHAPTER XIX

Robert de Cotte

THROUGHOUT his long career the success of Robert de Cotte was nearly as remarkable as that of J. H. Mansart. With less opportunity of enrichment, he acquired an unrivalled reputation, not only in France but in other countries, and it was a reputation fairly won, for he appears to have been an able architect and an honest man. The inevitable portrait by Hyacinte Rigaud shows him as a man of open countenance, alert, vivacious, energetic, and highly intelligent. De Cotte was born in 1656, and is said to have been the son of an architect, and the grandson of the Fremin de Cotte "architecte ordinaire du Roi," who served as engineer at the siege of La Rochelle in 1627-8, and produced an "explication brièvе et facile des cinq ordres d'architecture" in 1644. M. Marcel[1] says that Robert de Cotte was a pupil of Mansart, and that his first work was the "Eglise de Saint Germain" in 1681. There is, I think, some confusion here between De Cotte, builder, and De Cotte, architect, for the first Robert de Cotte who appears in the "Comptes" undoubtedly appears there as an "entrepreneur" and contractor for masonry. Payments were made to him in 1682 and succeeding years for work done at the Château and Parish Church S. Germain-en-Laye, at Marly, at Versailles, and at the Machine de Marly (1683-5). In 1685 he is specifically described as "Robert de Cotte, entrepreneur," and the final payment made to him in 1689 is "9 Janvier à Robert de Cotte, entrepreneur à compte des ouvrages de maçonerie par lui faits en 1684 et 1685 tant aux reservoirs qu'aux nouvelles escuries de Versailles 1,000 francs."[2] I find no reference to any work by De Cotte "entre-

[1] "Inventaire des papiers manuscrits du Cabinet de Robert de Cotte," Introd., p. xii, Pierre Marcel, Paris, 1906.

[2] "Comptes," iii, 252. The entries of De Cotte in vol. iii of the "Comptes" are wrongly indexed.

preneur" after 1684-5. Meanwhile, a De Cotte appears in the "Comptes" in 1685 as "architecte du Roi" with a salary of 2,400 francs a year. Were there two Robert de Cottes? Or had the contractor given up his business and become an architect? My impression is that De Cotte in fact began as a contractor, but became an architect under circumstances which are not known, and that on his doing so he gave up his business as a contractor for this lucrative post of 2,400 francs per annum among the "officiers qui ont gages." The probability is that he came into touch with Mansart not as a pupil at all, but as a contractor carrying out Mansart's designs at S. Germain-en-Laye and Versailles. It was probably at about this time (1685) that he married Catherine Bodin, younger sister of the wife of J. H. Mansart, and the influence of the latter can be traced throughout all the earlier part of De Cotte's career.

De Cotte became an academician in 1687,[1] though only thirty years old. His all-powerful brother-in-law stuck at nothing in the advancement of his friends, and the extermination of his enemies. De Cotte at first seldom attended the meetings of the Academy, being fully employed by Mansart, and probably taking no interest whatever in academical discussions, but he was present when Mansart consulted the Academy as to the construction of the dome of the Invalides in 1689,[2] and again in 1690 when he raised a question about the imposts of arches between pilasters. After that year both he and Mansart were more regular in their attendance, and in 1693[3] he exhibited to the Academy several plans and sections of the principal churches of Venice and Bologna which the company pronounced to be ingenious but not "dans la dernière pureté de l'architecture." De Cotte had made these drawings during his voyage in Italy in 1689-90, and apparently intended to publish them though he never did so.[4] In the Bibliothèque Nationale are two octavo packets of notes made by De Cotte in Italy.[5] M. Marcel says they are "sans appreciations personelles," and though accomplished and skilful, there is no evidence of any artistic enthusiasm in De Cotte, "pas une exclamation d'enthousiasme, pas un

[1] Nominated by Louvois in January, 1687, in place of M. Gittard deceased. M. Marcel says that he was Director of the Academy from 1687 onwards. De Cotte, however, did not become director till at any rate 1699, and is first referred to as such in the "Procès-Verbaux" in 1708 ("Procès-Verbaux," iii, 296).

[2] "Procès-Verbaux," ii, 175.

[3] *Ibid.*, ii, 257.

[4] M. Marcel says these drawings are now in the Cabinet des Estampes (v, 6, 7, in folio).

[5] Fr. 14,663-14,664. Département des Manuscrits.

témoignage d'admiration fervente"[1]—indeed enthusiasm was out of fashion, and might have been ruled out of order by the Academy as incompatible with "le bon goût."

The fortunes of De Cotte rose steadily with those of his brother-in-law. One of the first steps taken by Mansart on his appointment to the *Surintendance* in 1699 was to reorganize the Academy of Architecture; and he was careful to give the preference to De Cotte, who between this date and 1708 became Director of the Academy, and in 1699 was elected an honorary member of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture. In 1699 for the first time he is entitled in the "Comptes" "architecte du Roi";[2] hitherto he had been merely described as "autre architecte." In addition to his salary of 2,400 francs as architect, De Cotte was granted in 1700 a salary of 8,000 francs as "architecte ordinaire et contrôleur à Paris," 1,000 francs was allowed him for his clerk, and an appointment (that of Controller at Fontainebleau) was found for his son Jules Robert at 4,000 francs per annum, with 600 francs for his clerk, though the son could not have been much over twenty at the time,[3] and appears from D'Argenville's account to have been most incapable. The family were doing well and Mansart spared no effort to push their fortunes. He even invented a new office for De Cotte, the "Bureau des desseins," at a salary of 800 francs, increased next year to 1,200 francs, for care of the drawings and "pour le papier, cire d'espagne, encre, portefeuilles, bois, bougie, chandelle, meubles, crayons, couleurs et autres ustencils qu'il a payez tant pour son bureau que pour celuy des dessinateurs."[4] Unlike modern architects, whose expenses amount to anything from twenty to fifty per cent. of their receipts, the French architects who were fortunate enough to work under Mansart's general administration had all expenses paid and everything found for them by the State. In the same year (1700) in addition to his other salaries De Cotte, who is now described as "Conseiller du Roy en ses Conseils, intendant[5] et ordonnateur

[1] Marcel, "Inventaire," Introduction, p. xxiv.
[2] "Comptes," iv, 427.
[3] His father was only forty-three in 1699.
[4] "Comptes," iv, 604.

[5] De Cotte was drawing as "architecte ordinaire" . . . Francs 2,400
as Controller at Paris 9,500
as keeper of the Bureau 1,200
as "Ordonnateur triennal" 6,600
19,200

In addition to this there were his fees (590 francs) for attendances at the Academy in the year. See "Comptes," iv, 972.

triennal des bastimens," received 6,000 francs as salary for this post and 600 francs for his clerk. Thus in a single year his emoluments had risen from 2,400 francs per annum to nearly 20,000, and in 1703 this was further increased by his appointment at a salary of 2,500 francs as "Contrôleur du bâtiment de l'église des Invalides," a gross piece of jobbery, as L'Assurance who knew every inch of the building and had probably designed the greater part of the Church, had been for years employed on the building and was still there at a salary of only 1,000 francs a year.[1]

The year 1700 really marks the beginning of De Cotte's extraordinarily successful career. Before that date, it is doubtful if he had done any work of his own, the whole of his time having been occupied in assisting Mansart at the Chapel of Versailles, the Trianon, and elsewhere, and not least of all in the building and financial speculations, in which De Cotte was extremely astute, and in which both he and his brother-in-law dabbled freely.[2] It is pretty certain that Mansart was much too busy with his "hautes affaires" to attend to the ordinary business of an architect. He left it to his clerks, doubtless controlled by De Cotte. Moreover, his constant attendance on the King left him no time for other people, and from 1700 onwards he steadily pushed forward De Cotte, substituting him for himself on distant journeys. Thus in 1701 De Cotte travelled from Marly to Lyons to arrange for the alterations of the Hôtel de Ville from Mansart's designs, and the erection of the pedestal of Desjardins' statue of Louis XIV in the Place Bellecour, and to settle the design of the buildings round the Place. On this occasion De Cotte took with him a valet and a draughtsman, and was away three weeks, for which he was allowed by the Treasury 1,500 francs.[3] He declined to take anything from the town of Lyons, but the Consulate, not to be outdone in generosity, sent him to Paris "un meuble de damas de Gênes rouge cramoisi et une veste en Brocard d'or."[4] As the cost of this came to 2,634 francs, 1 sou, 10 deniers, De Cotte did nearly as well as Mansart had done with

[1] "Comptes," iv, 1017-1018.

[2] "Il achétait sans cesse des terrains, faisait bâtir et revendait" (M. Marcel, "Inventaire," p. xv and note 1). In 1690 De Cotte had entered into a company with others to form a canal from S. Maur to Paris (Marcel, "Inventaire," p. 39).

[3] "Comptes," iv, 1022.

[4] See "Monographie de l'Hôtel de Ville de Lyon," Tony Desjardins, p. 46. M. Marcel quotes wrongly 3,634 francs, 10 sous. See "Hist. of French Arch.," Reginald Blomfield, ii, 147-148. The Hôtel de Ville was an unattractive building and Mansart made it worse.

the Duke of Lorraine under similar circumstances. The social progress made by architects can be measured by the fact that fifty years before Lemercier, a much better architect than De Cotte, had only received 100 livres for a set of designs for the whole Hôtel de Ville.

In the year 1700[1] the Abbey Church of Poissy was nearly destroyed by lightning. Mansart went down to inspect and estimated the cost of restoration at 180,000 livres. Nothing was done till 1705, when the King offered to find 300,000 livres on condition that Clement XI granted him the perpetual right to nominate the Abbess. The Pope agreed to this condition, but the King failed to find the money, for in the following month the Abbess was authorized to hold two lotteries to raise money for the restoration of the Church. 96,000 livres were raised, and the work was begun that year. By 1718, 300,439 francs, 3 sous, 4 deniers had been spent on the Church, but it was by no means finished, and by 1726 the patience of D'Antin, the *Surintendant*, was exhausted. He wrote to De Cotte from Versailles that it was time to finish the work, and De Cotte was to go to Poissy to report. A week later De Cotte reported that he had seen the Abbess and impressed on her that "donnée la dureté de temps elle devait moderer un peu ses exigences." It would appear that De Cotte was in charge after Mansart had made his report, and in the summary of works[2] it is interesting to note that the intention at any rate was to reproduce the old work exactly as it had been, the "ogives," "voutes," "roses des vitraux," the "arcs boutants," and the "entrelacs entre les boutants, et les ornements gothiques en manière de vases aux pointes des murs des vitraux" (gargoyles). Unfortunately, the church was finally destroyed in 1802, so that it is impossible to say what they made of the Gothic. Probably De Cotte found its execution so impracticable—by 1700 the Gothic tradition was dead—that when called on to restore the Cathedral of Orléans he gave it up, and designed two classical towers for the west front. His design was not accepted,[3] but the appalling travesty of Gothic produced there by J. J. Gabriel in 1726 might well have justified his decision to abandon any attempt at Gothic. It is interesting, however, to note that even the most academic of the classicists by no means repudiated the Gothic of their country. On the contrary they found something to admire in its construction, and its peculiar system

[1] Marcel, "Inventaire," pp. 287-317. [2] Marcel, p. 289.

[3] He did, however, rebuild the belfry in 1711, and in 1718-25 took some part in the church of Bonne Nouvelle at Orléans, though what he did is not clear. See "Inventaire," pp. 386-92.

of proportions, and there is evidence that though neither they nor the workmen understood Gothic architecture, they did their best to preserve it on its merits. The wholesale abuse of Gothic and Classic by the advocates of the one or the other has been reserved for the modern amateur and the revivalist.

The "Comptes" show that De Cotte was employed on all sorts of miscellaneous work. I find, for example, from an entry in the "Comptes" in December, 1705,[1] that he was paid 966 francs, 10 sous, travelling expenses for journeys from Versailles to Fontainebleau and the Château Demarest, to arrange for the capture of carp for Marly. His assiduity was rewarded in 1708. In that year Mansart died, and though the *Surintendance* went to D'Antin,[2] De Cotte was appointed "Premier architecte du Roi" at a salary of 12,000 francs a year,[3] and "Architecte de l'Académie Royale" at 3,000 francs a year. His various salaries seem to have amounted to something over 30,000 francs a year, only about half what Mansart had drawn, but as his staff, all his expenses, and apparently a house in the Rue des Orties were found for him by the State, and he was allowed to receive gratifications from his various princely clients, De Cotte was an extremely prosperous man. He inherited Mansart's practice, was recognized as the leading architect of his time, and was in great request both in France and foreign countries. In 1709-11 he was employed in completing Mansart's work in the Palais des États at Dijon, and in 1711 he was again called in at Lyons to design the Place Louis le Grand.[4] In 1713 he was consulted as to the Pont Neuf at Toulouse, injured in the severe winter of 1709. Two schemes are referred to in his papers, but no indication is given of what was actually done, and I have been unable to discover who was responsible for the design of this splendid bridge, as it now is. The local story is that it was designed and carried out by a certain Nicholas Bachelier in the sixteenth century,[5] about whom I am extremely sceptical, and no trace of whose handiwork is now apparent in the

[1] "Comptes," iv, 1189.

[2] With a consolidated salary of 35,200 francs per annum and the title of "Directeur General des Bâtiments, Jardins, Arts et Manufactures de S.M." (*ibid.*, v, 475).

[3] *Ibid.*, v, 296-389. He already received 6,600 francs per ann. as "Intendant et ordonnateur triennal des Bâtiments, Jardins, Arts et Manufactures de S.M.," and 6,000 francs a year as Controller of the Department of Paris. He appears to have been succeeded by his son in the latter post in 1710 (*ibid.*, v, 468).

[4] Place Belle-Cour. De Cotte was again consulted in 1732 in regard to two fountains for this Place. See "Inventaire," pp. 371-77.

[5] See "Hist. of French Arch., 1494-1661," Reginald Blomfield, i, 35-36, and Marcel, "Inventaire," pp. 123-124.

existing bridge. In regard to its construction, De Cotte prudently endorsed the opinion of a certain Le Maistre, who may have been employed on the aqueduct of Maintenon.

We now come to the designs made by De Cotte for various Princes and Bishops in foreign countries. The earliest of these appears to have been a scheme for new gardens and for the rebuilding of the palace of Buen Retiro, near Madrid, in which the Princesse des Ursins was keenly interested. Carlier, one of the royal draughtsmen, and a pupil of De Cotte, was sent out to take charge of the work in 1712, and De Cotte, who had never seen Madrid, made his designs from particulars supplied by Carlier and suggestions of the Princess. The gardens were begun, and Carlier, who seems to have been an obstinate and impracticable man,[1] had the impudence to substitute a plan of his own for the gardens, instead of that proposed by his master. De Cotte remonstrated with Carlier,[2] and pointed out that he had moved 320,000 cubic yards of earth in order to preserve the view of a mountain, whereas "en se retournant simplement on eut trouvé une vue superbe et des terrasses," and that the faults committed by his pupil reflected on De Cotte himself. However, he added, Carlier was not to be discouraged, "tous les débuts sont difficiles." De Cotte throughout showed himself a humane and reasonable man, though he was merciless to tradesmen who overcharged. For example, a charge for wood-carving done for the King of Spain, 1713-14, was cut down from 23,951 to 9,325 francs. In 1715 young De Cotte went to Spain[3] with his father's plans for Buen Retiro, but they do not appear to have been carried out, in spite of their having received the approval of Louis XIV.

In 1713 De Cotte began to work for Joseph Clement, Elector of Cologne, a characteristic German, extremely anxious to be in the fashion, but bent on being so at other people's expense. The Elector[4] wanted a new palace at Bonn, and a villa on the Rhine, to be known as La Douane, and connected with the palace by a gallery; he also wished to rebuild the Castle of Poppelsdorf. The Elector impressed on his architect that he was working for an Elector and not for Louis XIV, and when the plans appeared, wrote that De Cotte's plans were very fine, but were beyond the Elector's resources. He proposed

[1] He afterwards fell out with De Noailles, Bishop of Chalons, over De Cotte's designs for a new Evêché, 1719 (Marcel, pp. 113-14).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 206. The journey cost more than 4,000 livres.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 166-195.

constant modifications in the plans. Fortier, De Cotte's representative on the spot, reported that the Elector was constantly altering his mind, and was in such a hurry that he ordered buildings to be started before the plans had arrived, and when it came to details, the parsimonious Elector declined to employ Ballin, the artist recommended by De Cotte for the silver ornaments[1] of the chimney-piece, and desired him to send wax models, so that they might be executed by German workmen, who, though no inventors, could work well, and, above all, were cheap. Claude Audran also was to be asked to send sketches for decorations to be carried out by the Elector's men. Employers have been known to expect impossibilities of their architects, but they do not usually expect them to cheat in their interest. The Elector had no such scruples. He coolly suggested to De Cotte that D'Antin might include the charge for all the details which were being made in Paris for the Palace at Bonn, in the royal accounts. It would help the Elector and be nothing to the King. D'Antin not unnaturally declined, and the work almost came to a standstill. The Elector promised but never paid, and d'Hauberat,[2] who now represented De Cotte at Bonn, suggested that all work completed in Paris should be detained there until he did. The Elector finally made a payment on account in 1719, but Poppelsdorf was not finished in 1721, and De Cotte's papers do not disclose the conclusion of the business. Joseph Clement, the Elector, who hoped to make a great show without paying for it, cuts a mean and contemptible figure throughout the whole correspondence (1707-1721). The situation throughout must have been curious—De Cotte in Paris sending out designs as fast as he could without ever having seen the place, d'Hauberat, his architect—clerk of the works on the spot—playing off the Elector, and keeping on the workmen as best he could, and the Elector buzzing about in the background, cheapening prices, begging, if not actually stealing, complaining that "L'argent manque toujours," and trying to get out of his difficulties by cheating the workmen.

In 1719 Gaston de Noailles, Bishop of Chalons-sur-Marne, decided that the Évêché must be rebuilt, and obtained a grant from the Regent of 50,000 francs. De Cotte estimated the cost of the new palace at

[1] D'Hauberat in a letter to De Cotte dated December 17, 1716, says: "C'est la coutume en Allemagne d'avoir un Chambre dont la decoration soit en argent."

[2] D'Hauberat settled in Bonn, and in 1721 became *Intendant des Bâtiments* for the Elector. In 1727 he carried out the designs of De Cotte for the house of the Prince de la Tour et Taxis at Frankfort. See M. Marcel's note, "Inventaire," p. 181. M. Marcel suggests that d'Hauberat may have been employed on the vast Ducal palace at Mannheim.

269,285 francs, 1 sou.[1] The Bishop was in a tremendous hurry. De Cotte visited Chalons in May, the old palace was pulled down in June, and the Bishop, who had bombarded De Cotte with letters of advice and suggestion, announced that he would visit him in Paris, carry him off to Chalons to settle the foundations, and send him back to Paris in his "berline."[2] The new work was begun in the autumn, but the first architect clerk of works died, and his successor was pronounced by the Bishop to be "un incapable," who spent his time drinking, smoking, or sleeping, seldom visited the work, and when he did only did so to order the demolition of work he had already ordered. The Bishop insisted that De Cotte must come to Chalons himself, whereupon De Cotte at once fell ill, and the Bishop was driven to frantic inquiries as to what he was to do, should another architect be sent? and should the contractors carry on through the winter? The matter was settled by the death of the Bishop in the same month, and his brother, the Cardinal de Noailles, stopped the work and closed the accounts. Difficulties of this sort must have been constant and inevitable, in this system of delegation. De Cotte, and Mansart before him, made their designs in Paris, sometimes, but not always, after visiting the place, and those designs and a specification were sent down from the Paris office. A Superintendent, combining the functions of architect and clerk of works, was then appointed to reside on the spot during the works. De Cotte usually nominated one of the Government draughtsmen, who were, of course, under his direct control, Carlier, De Lespee, Jossenay, Fortier, d'Hauberat, and others. These men had to look after the work, arrange all business details, refer important points to the decision of De Cotte, and supply him with all necessary drawings and information in regard to the work on the spot. They had some authority, at any rate, to make designs of their own, as, for example, d'Hauberat at Bonn, and Carlier at Madrid, and they were fairly well paid. Claude Simon, who superintended the carrying out of Mansart's designs at the Hôtel de Ville, Lyons, had a salary of 2,000 francs a year while the work lasted. Some such system was, of course, necessary, in view of the cost and delay of travelling at the time. De Cotte reported to the Cardinal de Noailles that for the years 1711-19, when he had worked for the Bishop, the travelling expenses of himself and his draughtsman to Chalons had amounted to more than 4,000 francs, 1 sou "sans compter son travail personnel." The work undoubtedly suffered from want of control by the master hand. All architects who have prac-

[1] Afterwards reduced to 191,380 francs.

[2] Marcel, p. 419.

tised themselves know how greatly the quality of work depends on the personal touch, the delicate adjustments made on the spot, and when the designer is face to face with his materials and local conditions. A fine design, like a fine piece of music, may be ruined by clumsy, unsympathetic interpretation, and it is the inevitable tendency of high official architecture to overlook this fact. Officials have a touching confidence in the efficacy of the office, but there can be no greater delusion in regard to architecture. That art is as personal as the arts of painting and sculpture, and the reason why official buildings, even when well designed, are nearly always uninteresting, is, that they make no personal appeal, they afford no evidence of temperament; one can find no trace of the care, the emotion, the enthusiasm of the individual artist.

In 1717-18 De Cotte supplied designs for the Château of Frescati, near Metz, for the Duc de Coislin, Pair de France, Bishop of Metz. This building, which was said to have cost over 1,200,000 livres, was destroyed and rebuilt in 1802. In 1722 De Cotte was called in to report on the Évêché at Verdun, which dated from the sixteenth century. Charles François d'Hallencourt, the newly appointed Bishop, pronounced it unsuitable, and De Cotte, who visited Verdun in 1724, confirmed this in his report, condemning everything but the Chapel and principal entrance of the old building. He was instructed to prepare designs, and Jossenay, who was already an associate member of the Academy of Architecture,[1] was appointed resident architect. De Cotte's plans were on a vast scale, and there was the usual difficulty about money. The Bishop proposed to find it by the sale of wood, and induced the Grand Master of Woods and Forests to report that the forests of Verdun needed thinning. 1,300 acres at 600 livres the acre were to supply the money—780,000 livres. The Parliament of Metz, however, objected to this as an interference with their right of control, and declined to register the decree. The Bishop, who had no scruples in the matter at all, wrote to De Cotte in June, urging him to get the Parliament set aside one way or other, and he appears to have succeeded, for at the end of August he wrote to De Cotte: "Les difficultés avec le Parlement de Metz sont reglées." The sale was held in October, but turned out a failure, as the merchants formed a ring, and the sale was stopped. The Bishop, however, exasperated but undefeated, obtained a decree from the Conseil d'État in February 1725, ordering that the cost of all work to the palace was to be determined by De Cotte

[1] Denis Jossenay, elected 1717 + 1748.

and paid for by the sale of the woods of the Bishopric of Verdun. The works had already started, and the Bishop was full of suggestions; he wanted a frieze all round the building of the courtyard, and in the spandrels between the arches the arms of all the Bishops of Verdun, and all the windows were to be double. But he already found himself short of money. Two pavilions in the garden had to be omitted. The sale of wood had only realized 181,000 livres, and the Bishop wrote in November, 1725, that the rapid progress of the terraces was "miraculeuse, car tout cet ouvrage est fait sans argent." Nor did the Bishop help matters himself, for he was constantly altering the plans, and his idea seems to have been that everything was to come out of the contractor's pocket. The works were suspended in 1726, and in 1731 began the difficulties with the tradesmen. The Bishop shows up very badly, and De Cotte appears to have favoured him unduly. Chottin, serrurier, declined to accept his ruling, "Il a fait prix avec l'évêque et il a exécuté plus que le travail convenu."[1] A Canon was told off to make Chottin listen to reason. Fanart, the glazier, whose account had been cut down 20 per cent., also objected, and produced four certificates proving that he had charged no more than the price current at Verdun, where glass and paint, having all to be brought from Rouen, were more expensive than in Paris.[2] These men had been waiting some years for their money. De Cotte seems to have forgotten that while it is an architect's duty to protect his employer's interests, it is also his duty to hold the balance fairly between employer and employed. As for Charles François d'Hallencourt, he appears to have been an ecclesiastical dignitary, with a vivid sense of his rights, but an extremely vague idea of his duties, and these amazing Bishops, pluralists of the worst description, account for a good deal in the history of France in the eighteenth century. In 1739 Jules Robert De Cotte succeeded his father at Verdun, and the building was not completed when d'Hallencourt died in 1754.

In 1728-30 the Cardinal Armand Gaston Maximilian de Rohan, Bishop of Strasbourg, employed De Cotte to make some extensive additions and alterations to his Château of Saverne, since famous as Zabern for its *reductio ad absurdum* of Prussian methods,[3] and about the

[1] Marcel, p. 514. De Cotte's usual comment on the accounts was "Mémoire ne servant de rien."

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 522.

[3] "Inventaire," pp. 552-5. The works were carried out first under Carbonnet and afterwards under Le Chevalier, said by M. Marcel to have been a pupil of Mansart. The château was destroyed by fire in 1779, and rebuilt on new plans by the Cardinal Louis de Rohan, then Bishop of Strasbourg. It is now used as a barrack. Saverne had belonged

same time to design a new episcopal palace at Strasbourg. A competition between two contractors was held in 1731, and the work was begun soon afterwards and finished in 1741. Among De Cotte's papers are two estimates of cost, one of 316,926 livres, the other of 274,968 livres, in both cases without joinery, mirrors, sculpture, gilding, marble work, glazing, and painting. In the correspondence as to the building there is little of interest, except a note on prices of building and materials in Strasbourg at the time,[1] from which it appears that a 6 foot square of "murs en moellons" (rubble), 1 foot thick, was worth 7 livres, 11 sous; 2 feet thick 15 livres, 2 sous, 6 deniers; a 6 foot square of tiling, 6 livres; of paving, 3 inches thick, 16 livres. Iron was 4 sous 6 deniers the pound, and lead 8 sous the pound.

De Cotte also prepared a design for a house for Comte d'Hanau at Strasbourg, but the Comte preferred the design of Le Chevalier, De Cotte's representative, having already rejected a design made by one of the town's engineers. The latter was so bad that the Cardinal de Rohan "dit en pleine compagnie et devant l'ingénieur que ce plan n'avait ni rime, ni raison," and that if it was carried out he would send for the police.[2]

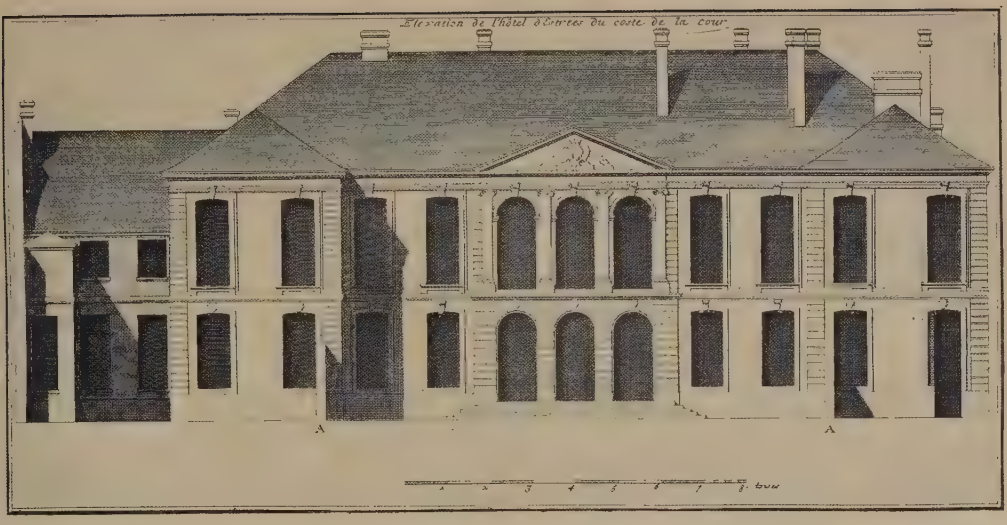
During all this time De Cotte had been busily employed in designing hotels and decorations at Paris. Blondel mentions among these designs the Hôtel de l'Abbeye de S. Denys, the Hôtels d'Estrées, de Lude, du Maine, the Gallery of the Hôtel de Toulouse, and the entrance to the Church of S. Roch. The Hôtel d'Estrées, in the Rue de Grenelle,[3] was one of his earliest works, having been built in 1704. Its planning was bad and old-fashioned, the kitchen and dining-room were at opposite ends of the house, and to get from the one to the other it was necessary to pass under the main stairs and cross the two entrance vestibules; all the rooms were *en suite*, and little attempt made to obtain enfilades or any variety in the rooms. On the other hand, the simple and dignified elevations are among the best of the whole series of Paris hotels. De Cotte only used Mansart's Ionic order on the first storey of the frontispiece to the court, and relied on his spacing and proportion rather than on the knicknacks of design often affected by French archi-

to the Bishops of Strasbourg since the thirteenth century. De Brosses describes this Cardinal Armand as "magnifique ici comme en France, l'air noble, les manières d'un grand seigneur, cependant peu estimé et peu accredité" ("Lettres familières écrites d'Italie en 1739 et 1740," ii, 352).

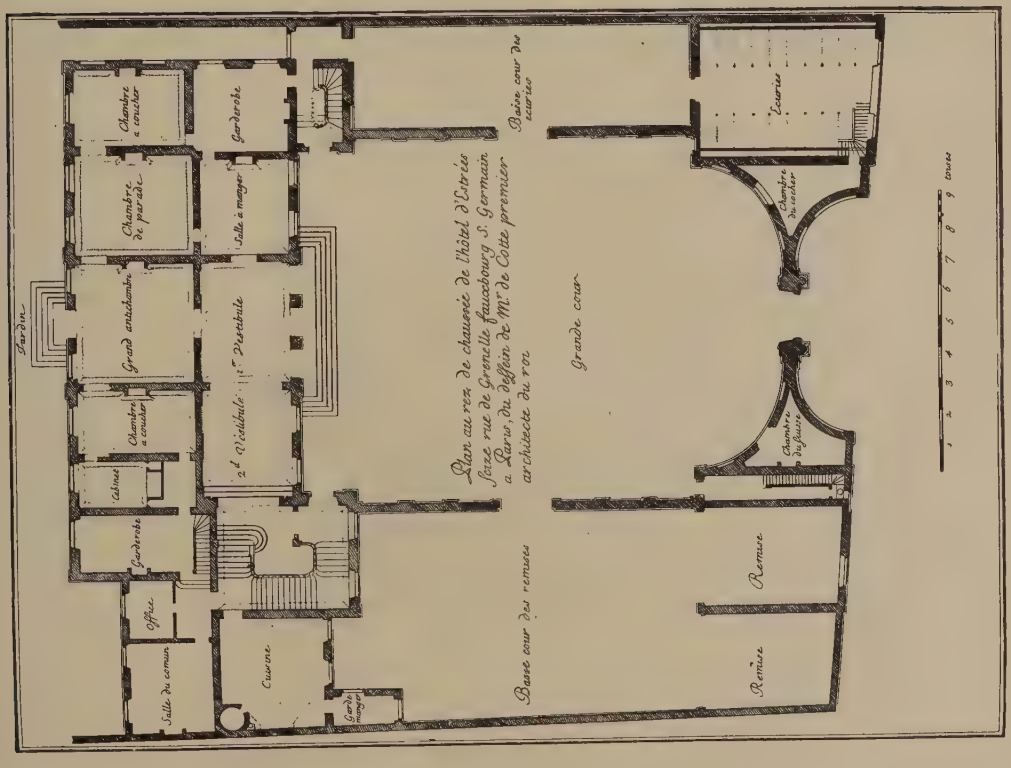
[1] Marcel, pp. 574, 575, 580, 581.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 566.

[3] Now the Russian Embassy.



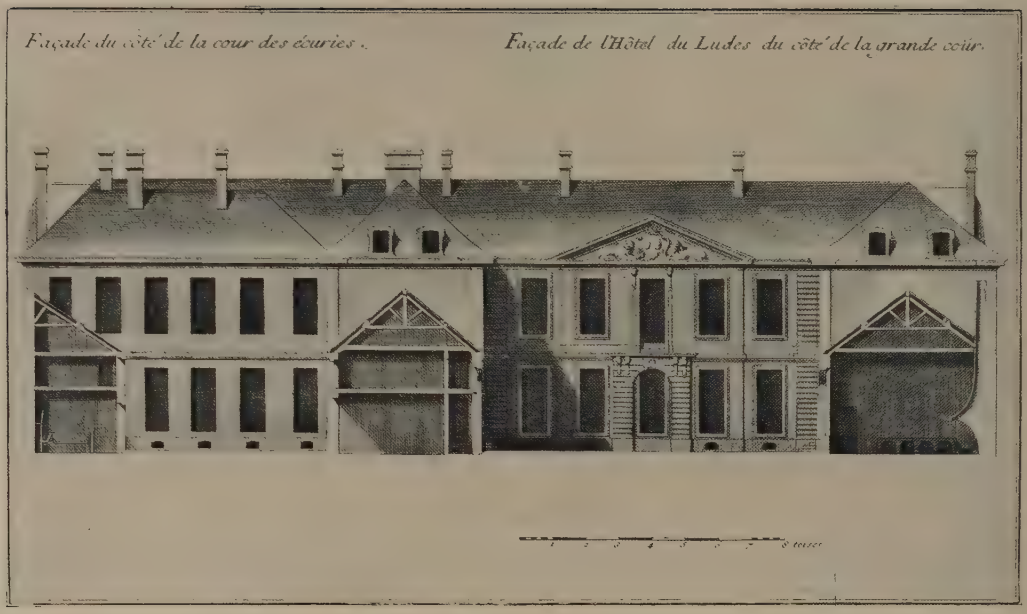
ELEVATION FROM FORECOURT



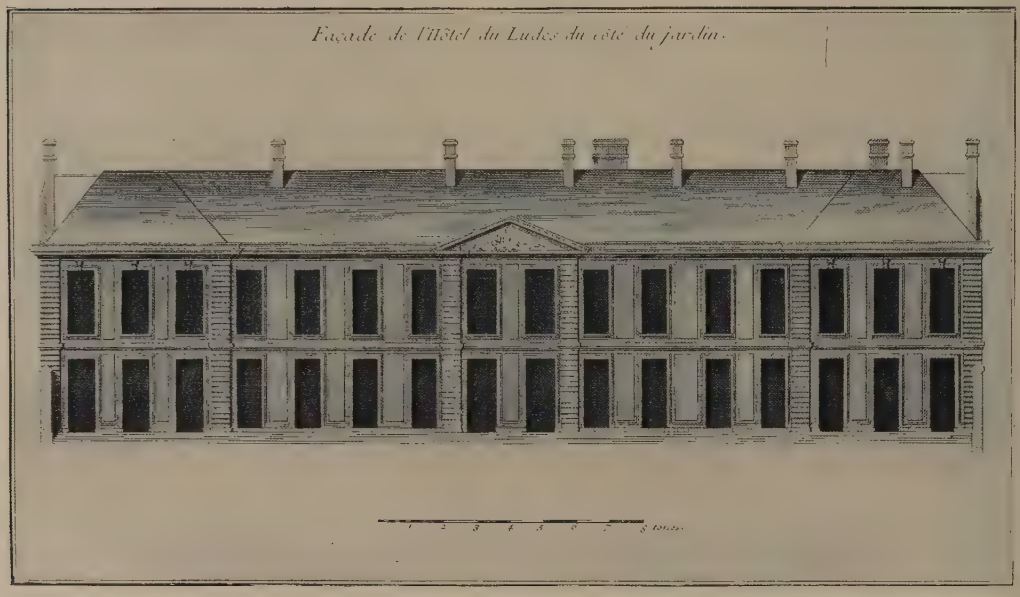
GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL D'ESTRÉES. BY R. DE COTTE (p. 50)

(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, ix)

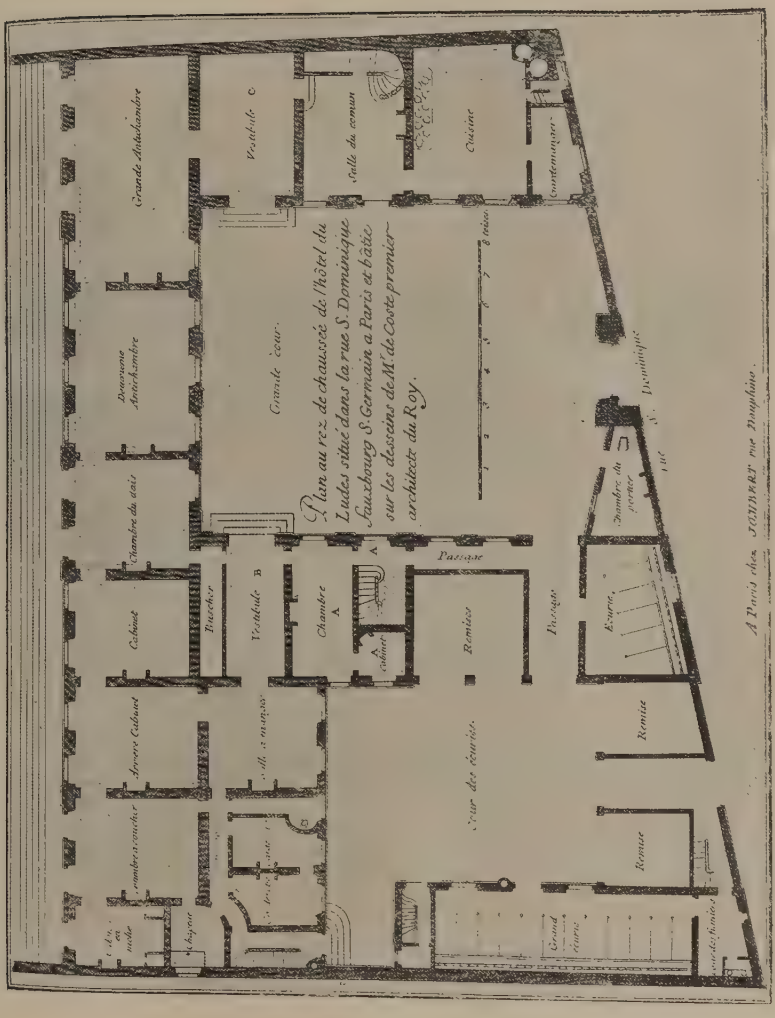


ELEVATION FROM THE FORECOURT

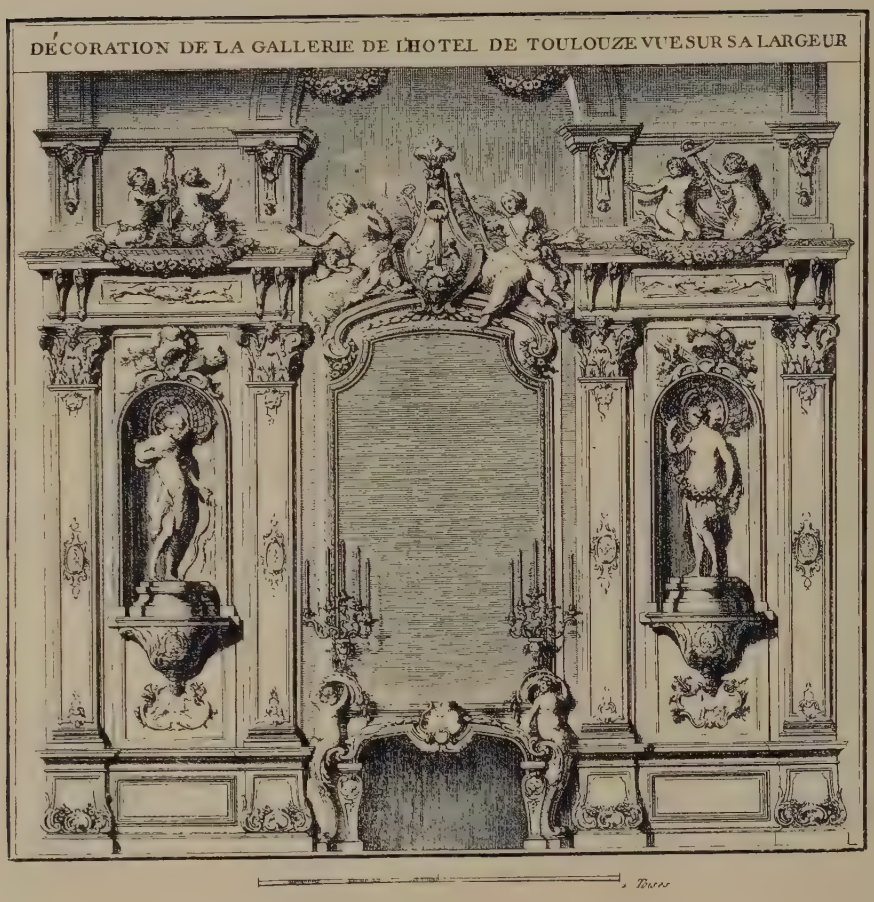


ELEVATION FROM THE GARDEN

HÔTEL DE LUDE. BY R. DE COTTE (see p. 51)
(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, XVIII)



GROUND PLAN OF HÔTEL DE LUDE, PARIS. BY DE COTTE
(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, XVIII)



GALLERY OF HÔTEL DE TOULOUSE. BY DE COTTE
(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE")

tects in the first half of the eighteenth century. The elevations of his earlier designs are marked by a straightforward and dignified simplicity which convinces me that De Cotte had a manner of his own, and that Saint-Simon's gibe of the "architecte sous clef," however true it may have been of Mansart, was malicious and calumnious in the case of De Cotte. The Hôtel de Lude[1] was built in 1710 on a very curious and inconvenient plan. The entrances from the *grande cour* were at the sides instead of in the centre. There was no grand staircase, in fact one has to search the plan to find any staircases at all. De Cotte, however, obtained an enfilade through seven rooms on the garden side, giving a total length from wall to wall of some 170 feet, and this was the one merit of the plan. The elevations again, as shown in Blondel, were simple and excellent, except for the inadequate frontispiece in the centre of the garden façade, which had only two window openings as against three of the end pavilions, with the result that there was a solid mullion in the centre line of the façade, a bad fault in any case, but as Blondel puts it, "moins condamnable" in the end pavilions of a symmetrical design than in the centre.

Between 1713 and 1719 De Cotte designed the decorations of the Hôtel de Toulouse, and it is by this work that he is now most generally known. He is credited by certain writers with having here introduced for the first time the new fashion for decoration with large mirrors over the fireplace, instead of the ponderous compositions of the architects of Louis XIV, and with having made an effort at a certain cheerful frivolity in detail. In point of fact, J. H. Mansart had already made free use of mirrors as a motive of decoration, and De Cotte's attempt to catch the new manner was neither one thing nor the other. The niches, with their heavy consoles badly placed between the pilasters, introduce a motive alien to this mode of decoration, and when he undertook it De Cotte should have forgotten that he was an architect. There can be no half measures in this exuberant manner, and if it is to be used at all it requires the reckless gallantry of the Hôtel de Soubise. Destailleur suggests that De Cotte was too busy to attend to its details. Certainly his work fell off badly at about this date. The Hôtel de Maine,[2] begun in 1716, was an inferior design, both in plan and elevation. An attempt was made at organization by keeping all the offices together on the right-hand side of the *grande cour*,[3] but the little courts provided for

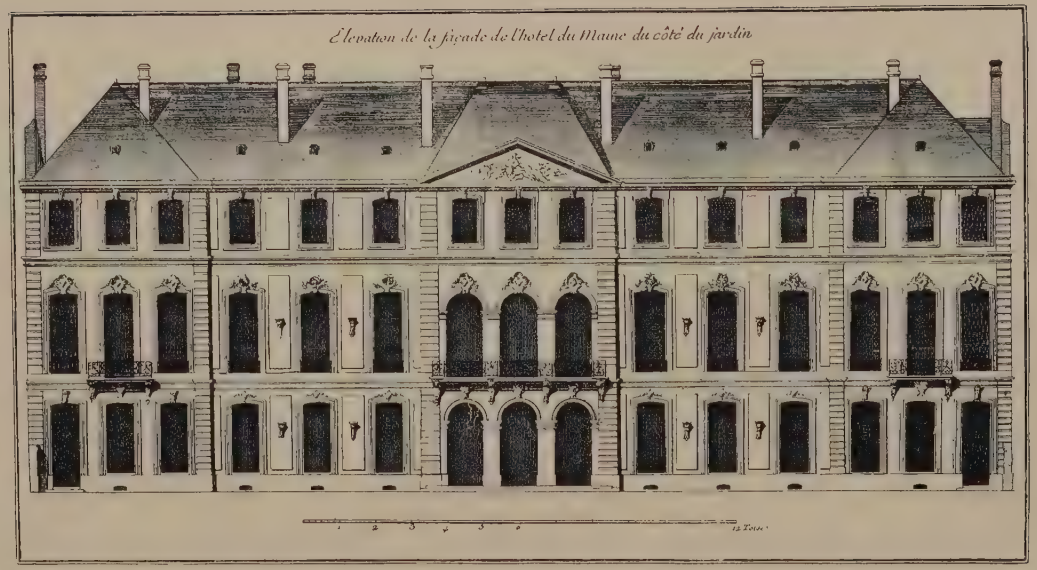
[1] Destroyed. [2] No. 78, Rue de Lille, was the German Embassy.

[3] Blondel, who criticizes this court very unfavourably as "barlong" instead of "oblong," gives as a rule for the proportions of forecourts that the length should be equal

light and air (about 13 feet by 12 feet) would have been useless in a three-storey building 75 feet high from basement floor to attic ceiling. The kitchen was placed in the extreme south-eastern corner of the *grande cour* next the street, and the *salle-à-manger* was placed on the first floor at the extreme opposite corner of the house. The rooms were, as usual, *en suite*, except for two passages on the first floor, 2 feet 6 inches wide, 36 feet long, one of which has no light at all, and the other has a window at one end opening on to one of the little courts mentioned above. The elevations are commonplace and overcrowded with windows, and the best thing about the design is the section through the house and forecourt, which suggests a spacious and dignified interior.

It may have been that De Cotte began with high ideals, but the thorns sprang up and choked them. When princes and potentates pursued him with invitations and loaded him with compliments, it may have been difficult to recollect that the business of an architect after all is to produce good architecture. Blondel thought so badly of the Hôtel de Maine that he even doubted if it was by De Cotte, but there seems no doubt that the design came from his office. A new entrance façade to the Church of the Pères de la Charité was built in 1733 from his design. This design also was so bad that Blondel remarked "cet architecte qui avoit un mérite supérieur, n'auroit certainement pas souffert la plupart des licences qui se remarquent ici," but this is by no means a solitary instance of the work of an able architect having suffered from his having more to do than he could possibly attend to himself. De Cotte had lost the breadth and dignity of his early manner, and as a house planner he appears to me to have been inferior to L'Assurance, and, indeed, to almost any of the considerable architects of the time of the Regency. Yet on account of the great position that he occupied, and also of his personal qualities, he is an important figure in the history of French architecture. Blondel says of him, "Son integrité et sa capacité lui en attiré la confiance de tous les grands seigneurs, et le suffrages des ses contemporains." A great reputation in a man's lifetime is not always evidence of his personal merit, especially in architecture, and especially in the tainted atmosphere of the Regency. De Cotte, though he knew his business, does not appear to me to have been in any sense a great architect, but he was shrewd, capable, and adroit, a skilful administrator and a man of honour and humanity.

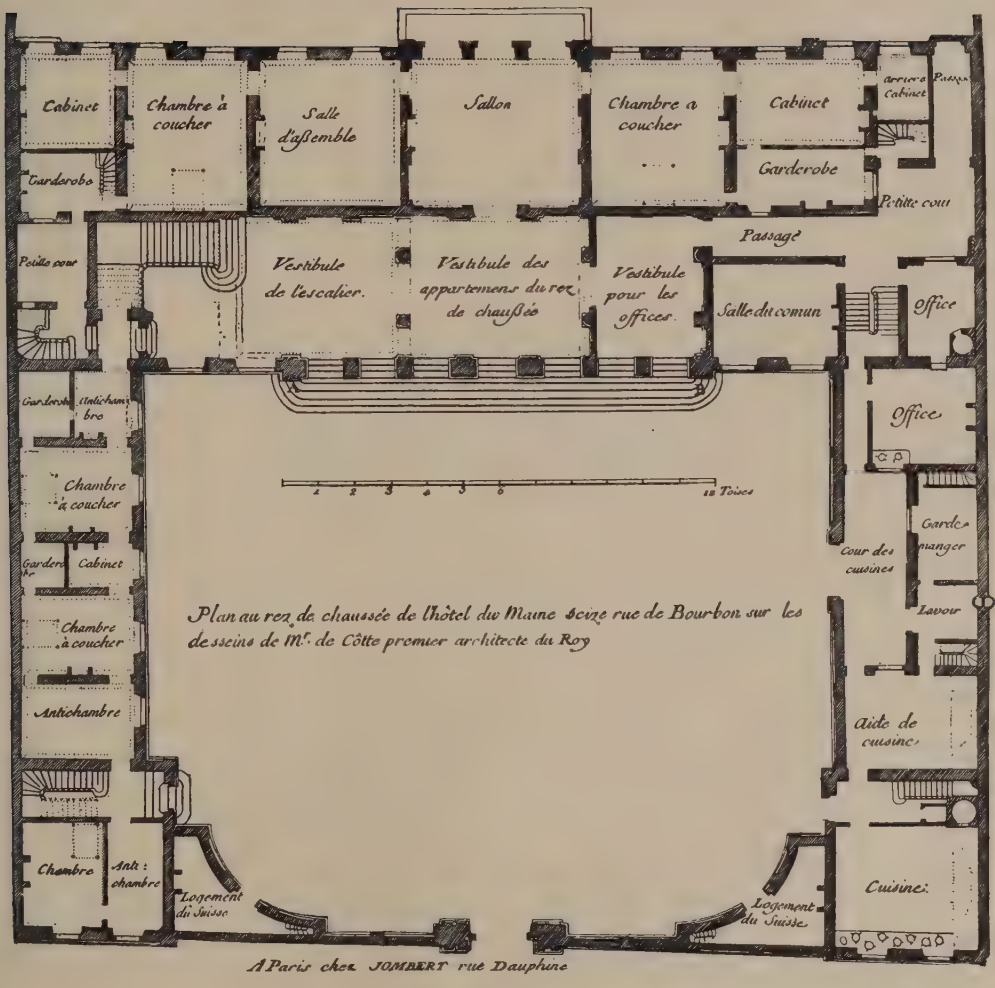
to the length of the diagonal of the square of the breadth. Blondel might well say of the little courts that they were "sombres et peu salubres."



ELEVATION

HÔTEL DU MAINE. BY DE COTTE (see p. 52)

(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE")



GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DU MAINE (see p. 52)

He died at Passy in 1735, aged 79. D'Argenville says of him: "Il étoit doué d'une imagination facile vive et réglée par un jugement sain et un travail assidu. Des mœurs simples, un extérieur modeste, un caractère obligeant et virtueuse rélévoit le prix de ses talens."[1]

[1] "Vies," i, 418.

CHAPTER XX

Jacques Jules Gabriel

In the course of this study I have in several instances called attention to the strong conservative instinct of the French middle class, the tenacity with which families adhered to their professional traditions from generation to generation, and also to the closely intimate society these families formed among themselves, so that in fact, in an informal manner, they almost took the place of the old guilds. The families of Du Cerceau, Metezeau, D'Orbay, Bruand, Hardouin, Mansart, L'Assurance, and De Cotte are familiar examples, but the Gabriel family is perhaps the most remarkable. The founder of the family seems to have been the Jacques Gabriel, "entrepreneur de maçonnerie," who makes his first appearance in the "Comptes" in 1667, as contracting for the masonry of the Gobelins factory, and whose name is regularly entered from that year onward till the date of his retirement in 1684, as in receipt of large payments for masonry at Versailles and Clagny. Thus in 1679-1680 he received 310,730 livres, including 256,000 francs for work at the Orangery, and in 1680 he was paid for work at Versailles 488,300 francs.[1] In January 1682 he received a lump sum of 306,000 francs, representing 47 payments for the masonry of the "grand aisle" (the north wing) at Versailles, and in 1683 the balance of all that was due to him on a total of 3,348,743 francs for work at Versailles from 1668 to 1682.[2] The last payment made to Jacques Gabriel was for the parish church of Versailles in 1684. From the first he had been included among the "officiers qui ont gages," with a modest retaining fee of 30 francs per annum, the regular allowance to the Royal tradesmen.[3] Apparently Jacques Gabriel retired in or soon after 1684 to a

[1] Gabriel usually contracted by himself, but in 1678 he was associated with Jean D'Orbay (contractor) in a contract for large sums at Versailles.

[2] "Comptes," ii, 308.

[3] The fee was nominal, the appointments carrying with them special privileges, and being usually hereditary, or obtained by purchase from existing holders.

property he had bought at Villeneuve S. Georges, and here he died, probably in the autumn of 1686.[1] He left a considerable property, proved at 255,272 francs, which M. Lot, writing in the "Nouvelles Archives" in 1875, estimated to be worth 1,215,000 francs (money of 1875), but in 1688 the widow and heirs of Jacques Gabriel had to refund to the state 41,610 francs, 19 sous, 9 deniers on account of errors of calculation to the prejudice of His Majesty, in several accounts and measurements of masonry between 1668 and 1682,[2] and the balance due on work done from 1682 onwards was not paid up till 1702 ("Comptes," iv, 822). Meanwhile Maurice Gabriel, "entrepreneur," who seems to have been a cousin, carried on the business at Versailles. In 1685 he received 221,100 francs for materials prepared by him for the church at Versailles, and immediately next him in the same account appears Robert De Cotte, "entrepreneur," for the masonry of a new reservoir for the Hôtel de Villeroy.[3] In 1686 Maurice Gabriel paid 43,000 francs and other sums for the materials of the Hôtel de Vendôme and the mill at Clagny pulled down by him, and in 1687 he received 264,075 francs, 10 sous, 6 deniers for work in the Church of the Capucines and the buildings of the Place Royale, and this work continued intermittently through the years 1688-92. Maurice Gabriel died in or before 1710. In the year 1711 the balance of a contract for 100,527 francs, 1 sou, 3 deniers was paid to the heirs of Maurice Gabriel and L'Espine, "entrepreneurs," for masonry carried out by them in the chapel and dependencies of Meudon between 1699 and 1705; the last payment for which work had been made nine years before.[4] The contractor's business seems to have terminated with Maurice Gabriel. Henceforward the dynasty was to be a dynasty of architects, including in its succession the most brilliant architect of the eighteenth century.

In 1688 a Sr. Gabriel receives 4,025 francs as three-quarters of his salary as "contrôleur général alternatif des Bastimens, jardins, tapisseries et manufactures du Roi."[5] The Sr. Gabriel was Jacques Jules Gabriel, at this time 21 years of age, having been born in 1667. It seems amazing

[1] See "Nouvelles Archives de l'Art Franc.," 1876, pp. 318 *et seq.*, for the inventory of sale (1) of this property, (2) of a seat in the parish church, (3) of the contents of his house of la Grille, (4) permission to say the Mass in the chapel of his house, (5) of his estate as proved in 1688. It consisted of six houses in Paris, one at Versailles, and other investments. In the inventory No. 1, Gabriel is described as "Architecte des Bâtiments du Roi," but he certainly was the contractor.

[2] "Comptes," iii, 6, 7.

[3] *Ibid.*, ii, 642.

[4] *Ibid.*, iv, 1012, and v, 539.

[5] His colleagues were Le Nôtre and Lefebvre.

that this young man with little or no training and experience should suddenly find himself among the principal officers of the Royal buildings. In point of fact, his mother had bought the charge from J. H. Mansart for the sum of 80,000 francs, and as J. H. Mansart was cousin to the widow Gabriel he no doubt exerted himself to cover up this disgraceful piece of nepotism. Jacques Jules Gabriel being at the time of the transaction (1687) a minor, the consent of his guardians had to be given—viz., Marie Delisle, his mother, and widow of Jacques Gabriel, the contractor; Charles Gabriel, uncle; Maurice Gabriel,[1] cousin of his father; M. Jules Hardouin Mansart, cousin of his mother; "Chevalier de l'ordre de Nôtre Dame du Mont Carmel, et de St. Lazare de Hierusalem, Conseiller du Roi en ses Conseils, Intendant des Bastimens Arts et Manufactures de France"; Gabriel Blanchard, painter and professor in the Academy of Painting and Sculpture; Chemet, Contrôleur-Général of "Rentes sur la Clergé"; and Jacques Gabriel, architecte and contractor, and cousin of the future Controller, who is further described in the deed as "Architecte Ordinaire des Bastimens de Mademoiselle de Montpensier." Jacques Jules Gabriel was, however, a very capable young man, and he very soon showed himself to be one of the ablest of the rising generation. In 1694 he became Controller at Chambord, and in 1699 a member of the Academy of Architecture, in which year he received his first fee for attendance. In the accounts for this year (1699) there are three Gabriels—(1) the Controller, Jacques Jules, with his usual salary; (2) M. François Gabriel, Conseiller du Roi, Trésorier-Général desdits bastimens; and (3) a Sr. Gabriel, who is merely described as "autre architecte," with a salary

[1] See "Nouvelles Archives," 1876, pp. 341-346. In the deed all the Gabriels are styled architects, and Jacques I and Maurice "Architectes du Roi." They do not appear to have had any right to this title, which was reserved for members of the Academy of Architecture. In another deed of emancipation of Claude Gabriel, in addition to members of the Gabriel family, there appears "Pierre de l'Isle Mansart, architecte, oncle maternel," and Messire Michel Hardouin, Conseiller Contrôleur Général des bastimens du Roi," in addition to the eminent Messire Jules Hardouin Mansart, "cousin maternel." The family connection was endless and unassailable. The pedigree given in the "Nouvelles Archives," pp. 350-51, is erroneous. It makes Jacques II the "contrôleur général" identical with the contractor Jacques I, who married the cousin of J. H. Mansart and died in 1686. The mistake vitiates the entire pedigree, which was drawn up before M. Guiffrey had published the "Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi" in 1881. M. Lemonnier seems also to have lost his way * in the family tree of the Gabriels, and confused Jacques II the Controller with his father Jacques I the builder and contractor.

* "Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie royale d'architecture," ii, 125. M. Guiffrey in the index to the "Comptes," vol. iv, strangely identifies Ange Jacques Gabriel (b. 1698) with the Controller.

of 1,000 livres. I can find nothing further about numbers 2 and 3, except that their names appear in the "Comptes" year after year.

In 1700, Gabriel's salary had been raised to 8,000 francs, with 1,000 for his commis.[1]

Gabriel had a further allowance of 600 francs made him in 1701, for a Secretary and Under-Secretary;[2] and apparently at this date he was drawing his salary of 8,000 francs as Controller, with 1,000 francs for the Sr. Papillon, his clerk; and 5,500 francs as "Contrôleur-Général alternatif," and his fees for attendances as an academician when they were paid. In 1708 he added another 1,000 francs as "architecte-ordinaire,"[3] and 6,000 francs as "Contrôleur des dehors du Château." This was in the first year of the control of De Cotte, who appears to have been not less solicitous than Mansart for the interests of his office. Unless any of his numerous offices have been omitted, I make out that Gabriel drew in fixed salaries something over 20,500 francs[4] a year. Papillon, his head clerk, received 1,000 francs.

The earliest work of Jacques Jules Gabriel was the completion of

[1] "Comptes," iv, 681. In this year, De Cotte received the same amount; his son 4,200 francs; Lambert, 6,000; "y compris ceux de son commis"; L'Assurance, "architecte du Roi et Dessinateur," 5,000 francs. Among the draughtsmen were Pierre Le Pautre, Carlier, Marquis, Rivet, and Cauchy; De Lisle and Mollet were Controllers, Haubrat (or Hauberat)—whom I have already referred to—an inspector at Chaville.* Le Maistre and De L'Espine, "architectes et experts pour la verification des toisez des bastimens." Many of these names appear again and again in connection with the Royal buildings; and it was from this class that De Cotte drew his superintending architects. Le Maistre became an academician in 1698; Lambert, L'Assurance, Mollet, De Lisle and Le Maistre fils, in 1699, Rivet in 1700, De L'Espine in 1706. It is impossible to say whether these men were really the best architects of their time—one hears little of what was going on in the provinces; and the ring of the Royal Office of Works was so close and impenetrable that nobody outside it had a chance of honour and preferment. Presumably they were all capable men; and, with the exception of L'Assurance and De Cotte, that is about all one can say of them.

* Chaville had been the houses of Louvois.

[2] "Comptes," iv, 720.

[3] *Ibid.*, v, 296, 387. It is possible, however, that this "Sr. Gabriel autre architect," mentioned in the "Comptes" in 1699 as drawing 1,000 francs, was really Jacques Jules II, and that the latter had been in receipt of this salary since the year 1699.

[4] According to my calculations, worth about £4,000 a year, though I admit the difficulty of fixing a ratio of values. This would allow £250 a year for a Head Clerk, who would certainly receive more than that in the office of an equivalent modern architect. The figures, which in these and other cases I have extracted from the "Comptes," have their importance as evidence of the sort of positions occupied by architects in the time of Louis XIV as compared with the position they occupy to-day. The balance is heavily in favour of Louis XIV, in whose reign architecture was really considered a matter of importance, and worth paying for.

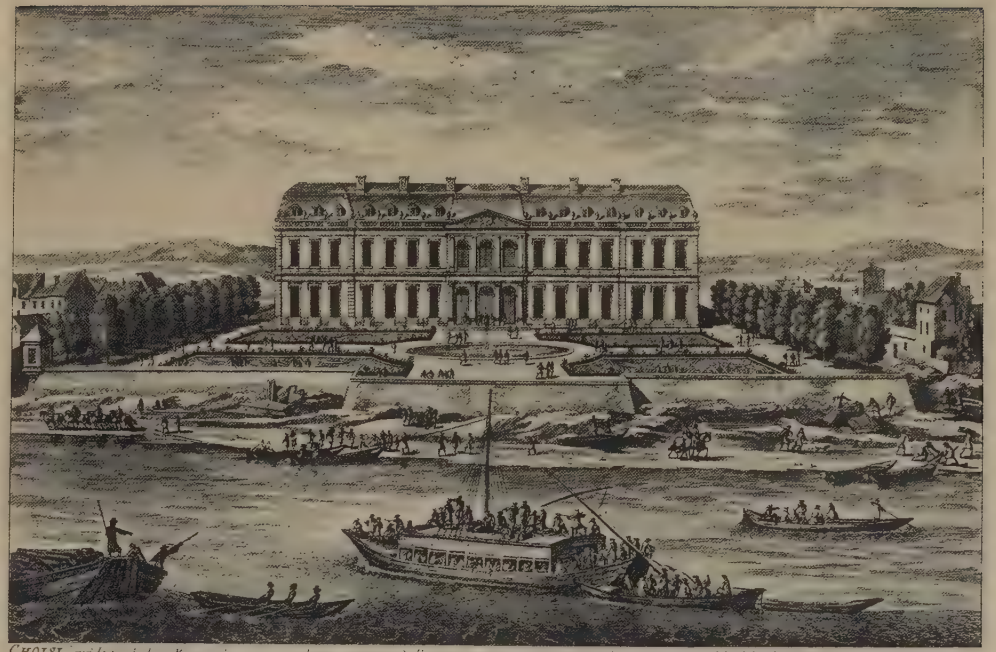
Choisi, from the designs of his father, for Mademoiselle de Montpensier. Piganiol de la Force says that Choisi was sufficiently complete for Mademoiselle to entertain the Dauphin and some of the Royal princes there in July 1686.[1] The elder Gabriel (the contractor), who died that year, had retired in 1684; and it is therefore possible that this was actually designed by his son, Jacques Jules. Choisi appears from the view by Perelle to have been a great lump of a house, overpowered by a heavy mansard roof. After the death of Mademoiselle it came into the hands of the Dauphin, who exchanged it with 400,000 livres added, for Meudon, with Madame de Louvois. Her son-in-law, the Duc de Villers, sold Choisi to the Princess de Conti, who sold it to Louis XV in 1739. From that date onwards, work was constantly going on here for Louis XV, "qui parôit avoir une affection particulier pour se séjour délicieux." The best artists of the time were employed at Choisi under the direction of the Gabriels, father and son. Notwithstanding, the Palace was out of fashion in twenty years. Piganiol de la Force added a postscript to his ninth volume, to the effect that Choisi, in the opinion of connoisseurs and all strangers, did not in the least deserve the excessive praises lavished on the design of the house and its gardens. It had neither "ensemble" nor "noblesse," and looked like a mere "rendezvous de Chasse Royal."[2] All that is now left of this "séjour délicieux" are two pavilions next the principal entrance.

In 1707 Gabriel designed a house for Madame de Varangeville in the Rue S. Dominique, Paris. It was not a very important or attractive building. The main block consisted of five apartments *en suite*, with an entrance from the *grande cour* tucked away in the left-hand corner. The elevations were badly designed, but the arrangement of the bedrooms and dressing-rooms in a suite to itself, with a separate service stairs at one end of the building, and the placing of the kitchen and offices in relation to the *salle-à-manger*, suggest the younger generation, no longer content with the provision for mere parade which had satisfied the school of J. H. Mansart. Blondel mentions an Hôtel de Feuquiere by Gabriel, which he promised to illustrate but never did,[3] and remarks—possibly in explanation of the little that he seemed to know of Gabriel—that the latter was very much occupied on

[1] "Desc. de Paris," ix, 137.

[2] Vol. ix, 522. Choisy le Roi is on the Seine, about 10 kilometres above Paris. "Les petits soupers de Choisy" of Louis XV were famous in the eighteenth century.

[3] "Arch. Franc.," i, 292.



CHOISI, sur la rivière de Seine, [illegible] appartenant à Mademoiselle de Montpensier, qui la fait bâtir depuis quelques années sur les desseins du Sr Gabriel Le Peintre est de l'invention de Mr le Nostre

A Paris Chez I. Marvette rue St. Jacques à la Victoire [illegible]

[Perelle

CHOISI. BY J. AND J. J. GABRIEL AND LE NÔTRE (p. 58)

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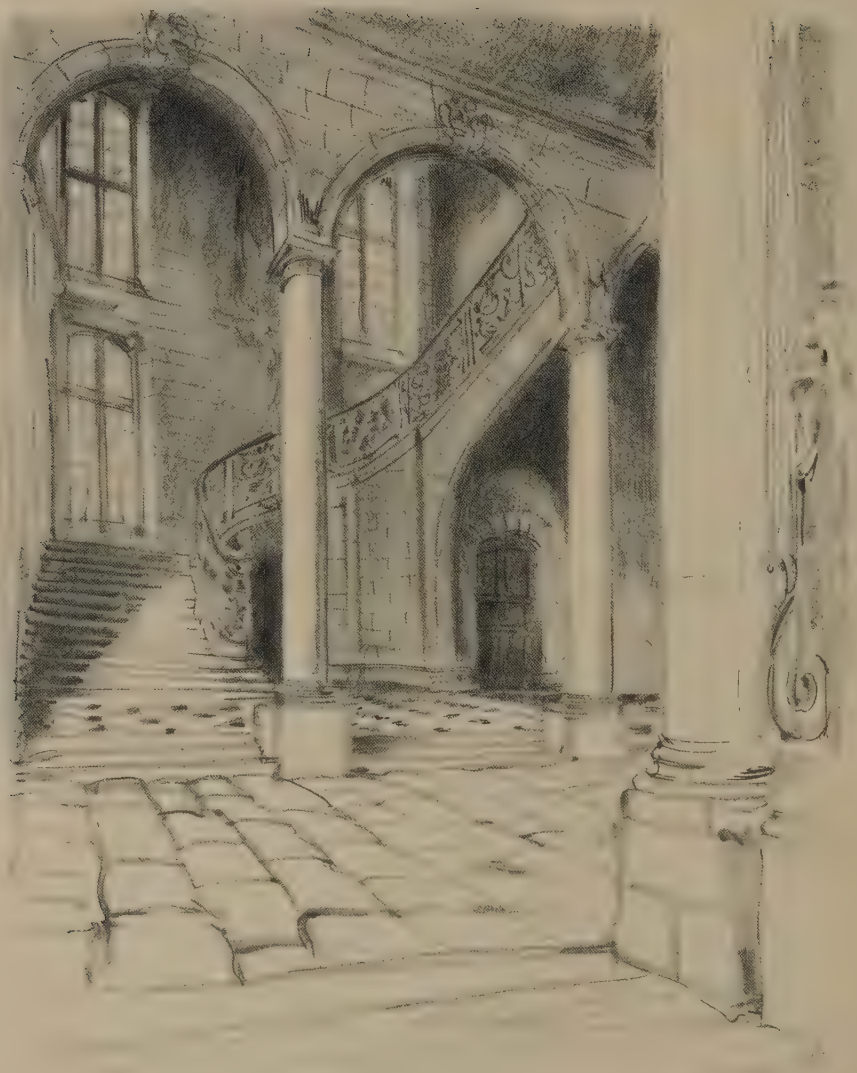
PL. CXXVI



Reginald Blomfield del. 1907

Hôtel de Blossac

HÔTEL DE BLOSSAC, RENNES (see p. 61, note 3)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

the building works of the King. He does, however, illustrate fully a house designed by Gabriel for a M. de Moras in 1728, afterwards known as the Hôtel de la Duchesse du Maine, who bought it in 1736.[1] The works were carried out under the superintendence of Aubert. It is evident, from the plan of this house, that Gabriel had made a great advance in design since 1704. The fine placing of the principal rooms *en suite*, terminated by the oval rooms at either end; the arrangement of the bedroom suites on both floors, the plentiful provision of service stairs, and even of corridors and passages—though the latter are very ill-lit—are developments undreamt of by De Cotte.[2] Blondel thought very badly of the elevations. They have the merit of simplicity, though the trophies set loose against the steep pitched roofs of the end pavilions on the garden side are silly, and it is difficult to see why Gabriel should have reverted to the bad French habit of keeping the roofs of the wings and main block separate, instead of continuous. The most notable thing about the Hôtel de la Duchesse du Maine was its design for the house and grounds as a whole. The site was a large one for a town house, and Gabriel made the most of it, both for house and garden. Blondel, whose remarks on this are admirable, says that, owing to this skilful plan, this Hôtel was "une des plus riantes" of all the houses in Paris. On the other hand, he points out that its construction was careless, and that it had been very badly built "comme le sont la plupart des édifices de nos jours qui sont érigés trop rapidement."

Gabriel was clearly too busy to look after his work. In 1737 the Chambre des Comptes was burnt to the ground, and the new building, designed by Gabriel—of a "simple et noble architecture"[3]—was completed in 1740; but in 1747 it very nearly collapsed. Gabriel had some part in the building of the Palais de Bourbon and the Hôtel de Lassay, though what he did is not clear. The original design was made by an Italian, Giardini, in 1722, and Blondel says it was continued by L'Assurance and afterwards by Gabriel and Aubert. It is probable that all the building except the entrance pavilions, shown by Blondel, were done by the Frenchmen.[4] In 1726 Gabriel designed the west front

[1] "Arch. Franc.," p. 205. No. 77, Rue de Varenne—now Convent du Sacré Cœur.

[2] The kitchens were placed in a court of their own, away from the house; and access to the dining-room was through the basement and up service stairs—highly inconvenient, one would have thought; but Blondel says, "malgré son incommodité" this arrangement "est préférable à placer les cuisines sous les appartemens de maîtres."

[3] Piganiol de la Force, ii, 40. The building was destroyed in 1871.

[4] The Palais Bourbon was regarded by critics as a landmark in the development of domestic architecture, and I shall return to this later.

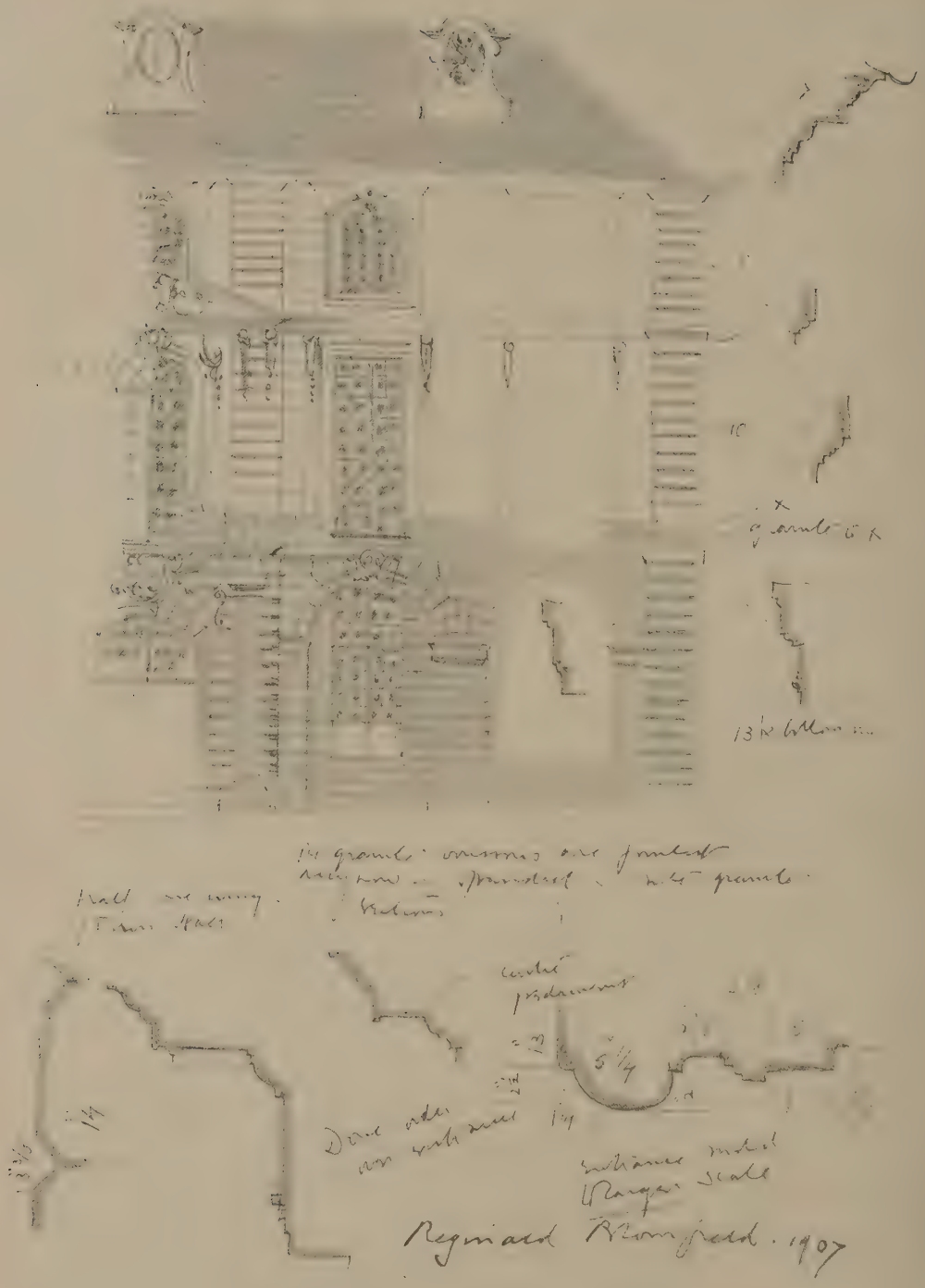
of the Cathedral at Orléans.[1] As a version of Gothic it is utterly wide of the mark, but the sense of mass and proportion ingrained in these eighteenth century men saved the building from being ridiculous. Bauchal says that in 1739 a model in wood was made from his designs for the Church of Sainte Croix at Orléans, at the large cost of 11,548 livres, and that this model still exists in the Évêché.

We now come to what is by far the most interesting part of Gabriel's career. I have noted the indifference of Louis XIV towards civic architecture. Considering his immense resources and power, he did little in Paris and nothing elsewhere to improve the cities of his subjects, but towards the middle of the eighteenth century French statesmen and administrators began to realize their duties in this direction, and whereas so far we have been dealing mainly with buildings erected for the use of Royal and private personages, we now reach, after an interval of almost 150 years, a deliberate and successful attempt to render cities more healthy and more beautiful, by rebuilding on a consecutive scheme of ordered architecture. The work so done is among the most important contributions of French architecture towards the development of that art and to civilization itself.

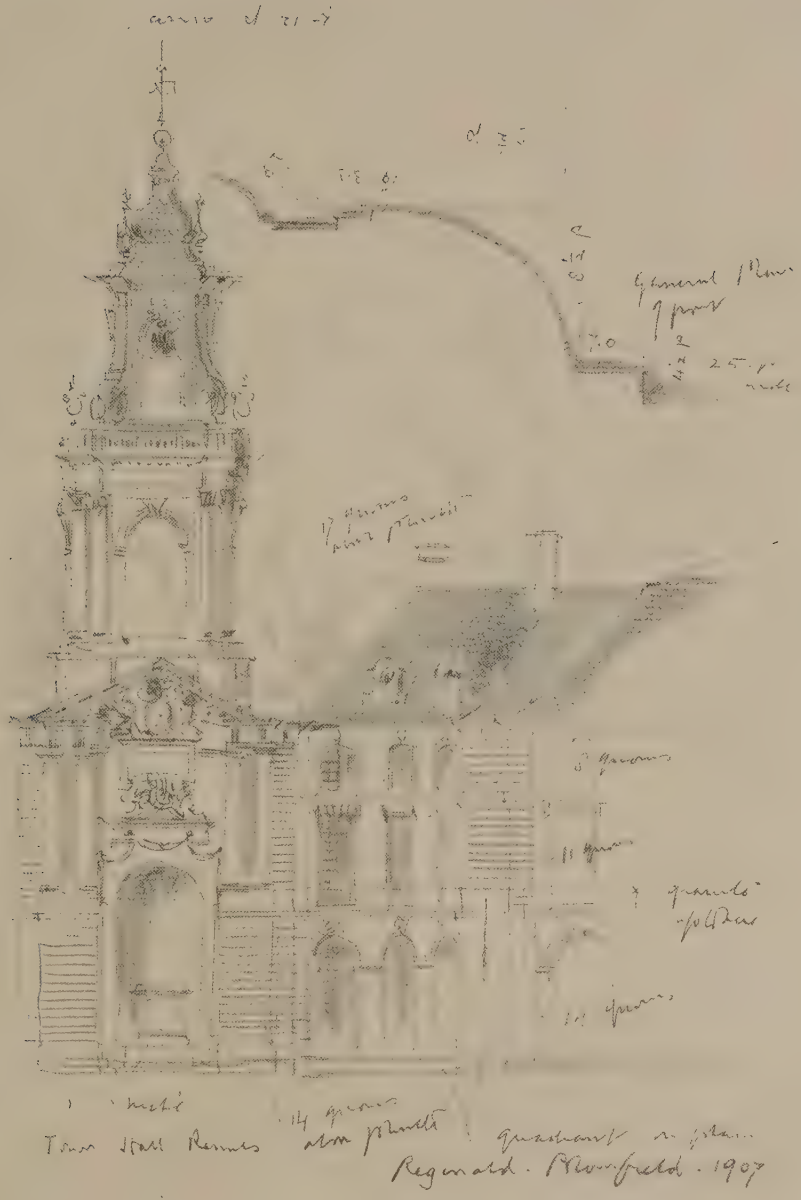
In 1716 Gabriel had been appointed "premier ingénieur des ponts et chaussées," and he seems to have been specially employed on large public works. In 1717-23 the great bridge of eleven arches at Blois was carried out from his designs, and at about this date he also designed the Évêché at Blois, a fine design in which he obtained an excellent effect by his continuation of the lower storey beyond the house as a massive retaining wall supporting the terrace at the first floor level. Besides the bridge at Blois, Gabriel designed the bridge of La Guillotière at Lyons, and the bridges of Poissy, Charenton, Saint Maur, Pontoise L'Ile Adam, Pont Saint Maxence, and Beaumont. Great public bridges had not yet been annexed by the engineer, they were still designed by architects as a branch of their regular professional work, and the carving was executed by some of the best sculptors of the time. The keystone of the centre arch at Blois has the arms of France supported by two tritons, carved by Nicolas Coustou, and above it rises an obelisk 18 metres high. At the bridge of Compiègne

[1] I find my note made on the spot in 1908 says: "The S. transept 1706. The ornament is a barbaric Acanthus scroll in the Gable. Gabriel and others have kept to main lines of Gothic and general forms, but show a total ignorance of the mouldings, details, and whole feeling of Gothic architecture. Only merit of narthex its lofty spaciousness, higher than in Gothic."

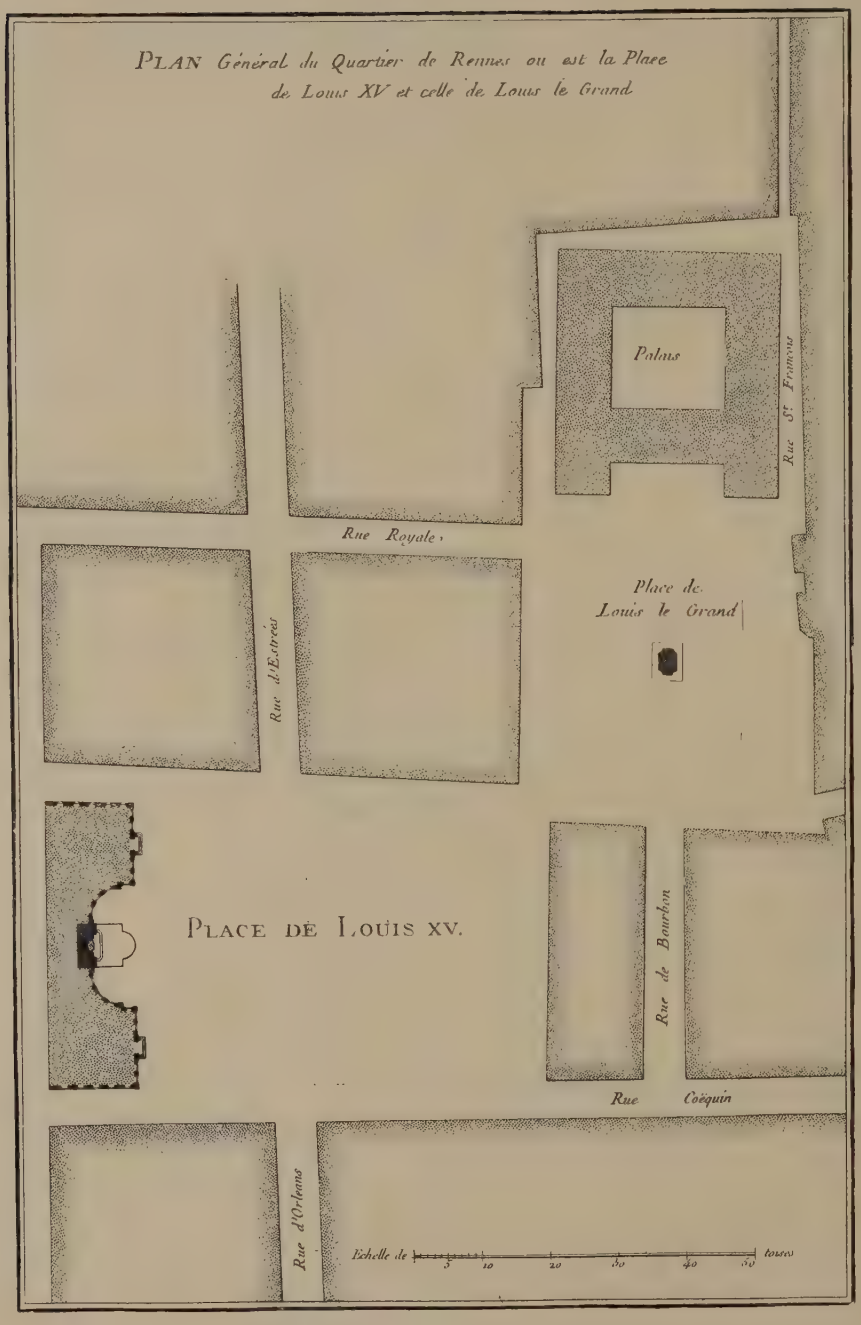
THE ÉVÊCHÉ, BLOIS (p. 60)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)



WING OF HÔTEL DE VILLE, RENNES (see p. 61)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)



ELEVATION OF CENTRE OF HÔTEL DE VILLE, RENNES (see p. 61)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)


PLAN Général du Quartier de Rennes ou est la Place de Louis XV et celle de Louis le Grand
Palais
Rue St Fremons
Rue Royale
Place de Louis le Grand
Rue d'Estrées
PLACE DE LOUIS XV.
Rue de Bourbon
Rue Coëquin
Rue d'Orleans
Echelle de 5 10 20 30 40 50 toises

PLAN OF LAY OUT OF RENNES (p. 61)
(FROM PATTE)

(1730), a similar trophy was executed by Guillaume Coustou, and two very beautiful trophies, one of them by the elder Coustou (Nicolas), were erected at the entrance to the bridge of Juvisy in 1728.[1] The result of trusting the work to competent architects was that these bridges are beautiful things, fine both in design and execution. A comparison of eighteenth century bridges, whether in France or England, with modern bridges in similar materials built from the designs of engineers and surveyors, reveals in the latter the most deplorable ignorance of all the qualities of design that make for monumental architecture.[2]

In 1720 a large part of the centre of the town of Rennes, the capital of Brittany, was burnt to the ground. Robelin, "Ingénieur du Roi," prepared a new plan for the alignment of the streets, and Gabriel was nominated by the King to make the designs for the rebuilding. Robelin divided up his plots into squares of about equal size, three of which were built upon. The fourth, opposite the Parliament House of Brittany, which appears not to have been injured, was left open as the Place du Palais, and round three sides of the square were built "superbes Hôtels, ornés d'un grand ordre Ionique, élevé sur un soubassement."[3] To the south-west of this place a new square, the Place de Louis XV, was formed, and on the west side of this is the admirable Hôtel de Ville, designed by Gabriel. Instead of advancing his centre, Gabriel set it back behind the frontage line, placing at either end large pavilion buildings, or "avant corps," in three storeys, and returning by concave quadrants to the centre-piece, which he designed without any openings at all, and solely as an architectural composition to form the background for the statue of Louis XV, and the substructure for a fantastic, but charming Clock Tower, 150 feet high. In the centre of this composition was formed an enormous niche, 11 feet 4 inches wide and 27 feet high, to the soffit of the keystone to receive

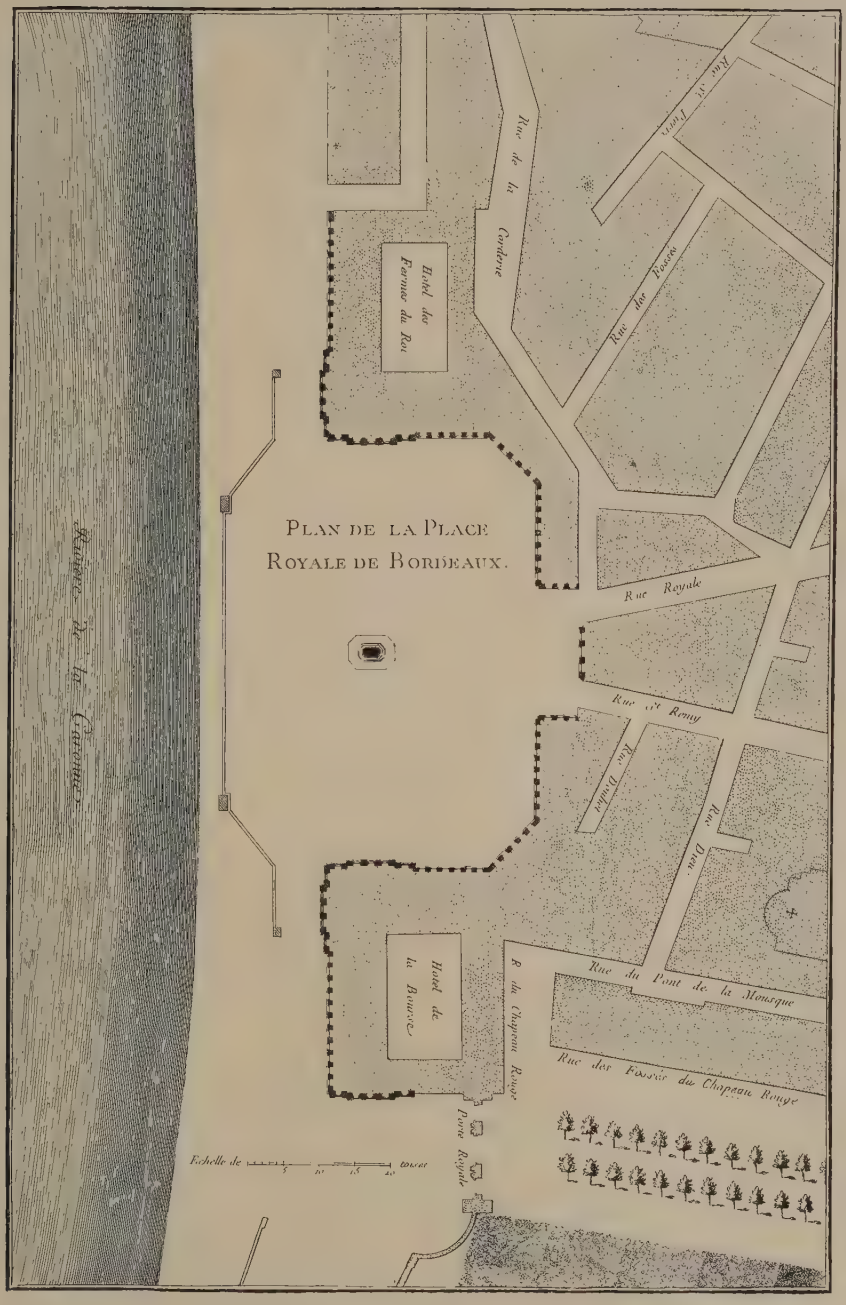
[1] See Piganiol de la Force, ix, 154-5 and 260, 261. Nicolas Coustou, 1658-1733, Guillaume Coustou, 1677-1746.

[2] I except, of course, Waterloo Bridge and the Pont Alexandre at Paris. I am referring to bridges in brick or stone, not to bridges in iron, steel, or reinforced concrete. In the new stone bridge at Kew, designed by eminent engineers, the pedestal and lamp trophy over the side arches are some distance out from the keystone of the arch. Instead of being over the centre of the arch there are seven modillions in the cornice under it on one side, and ten modillions on the other.

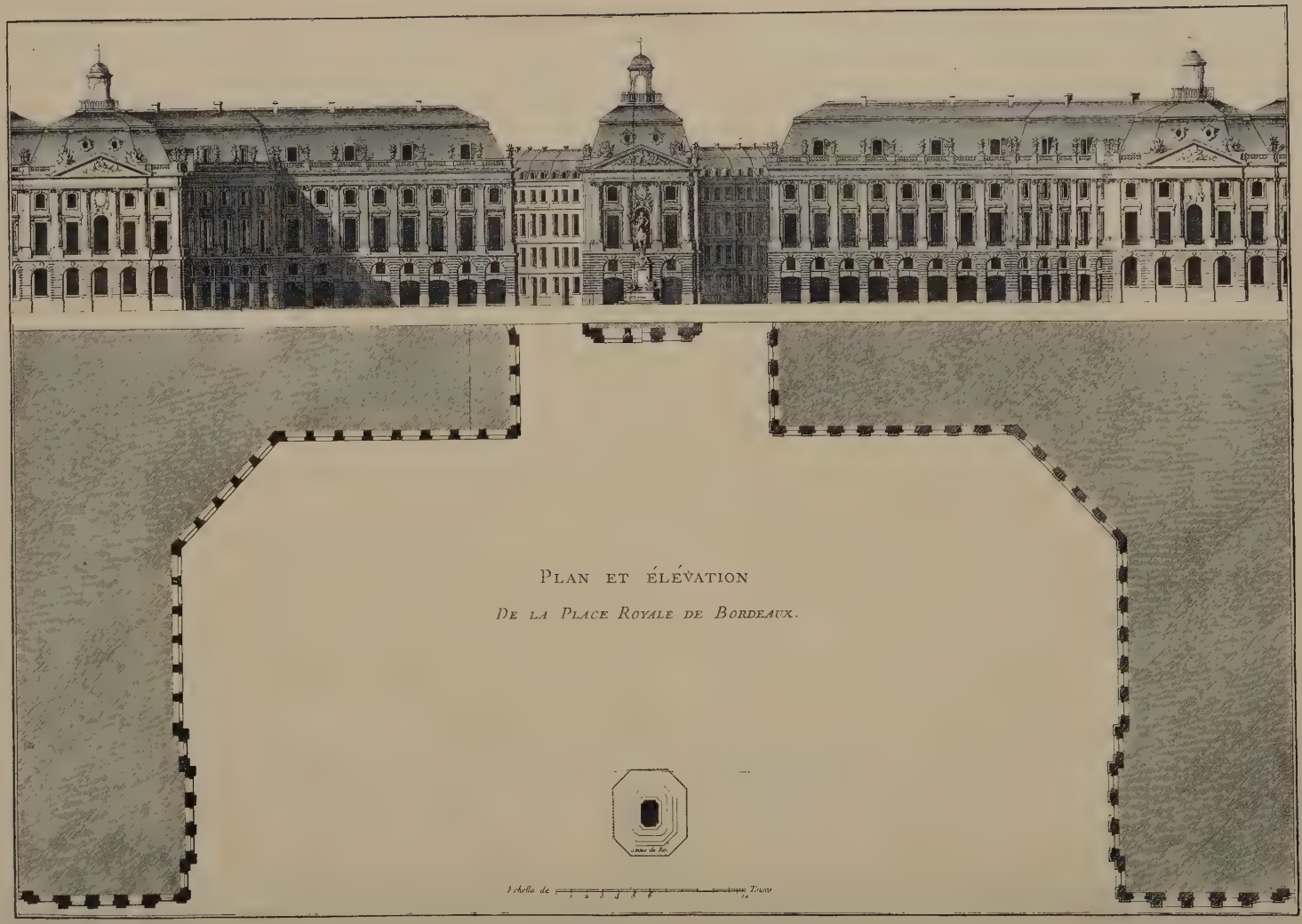
[3] Patte, "Monumens, etc.," p. 149. The Place du Palais was then called the Place Louis le Grand. There are several large town houses in Rennes dating from the end of the seventeenth century and early part of the eighteenth century worthy of careful study.

the monument to "Louis le Bien aimé"[1] by Lemoyne, but when Lemoyne came to examine the niche in 1744, he had it still further enlarged to take his statue. The Hôtel de Ville of Rennes is one of the most delightful eighteenth-century buildings in France. The only criticism one would make is on the hipping back of the roofs of the quadrants, in order to clear the lower story of the Tower, the result of which is to spoil the silhouette. Gabriel, one thinks, might have carried on his roofs to stop against a square storey above the pediment, and then begun his upper storeys. The interpolation of a low attic storey here would have improved the proportions and preserved the outline, otherwise the grouping and proportions of the buildings as a whole, the play of fancy and originality of treatment, and the general reasonableness of the design throughout are extremely attractive. The work of the elder Gabriel, both here and at Bordeaux, show a capacity for vigorous and original design fully equal in its way to that of his distinguished son. The Place de la Bourse at Bordeaux is one of the best things of its kind in existence. Unfortunately it has never been completed, and it seems lost in the litter of the quais of Bordeaux. It is curious that the French, with all their quick appreciation of beauty, are utterly careless of appearances when they are once outside the arts. Squalor and disorder seem to them immaterial if they do not interfere with their immediate business. In 1728 the town of Bordeaux, "une des plus grandes, plus belles et des plus commerçantes villes du

[1] The monument, which was to commemorate the recovery of the King, was not finally settled till 1744. Patte says: "Lorsque sa Majesté, dans le cours de ses triomphes, volant des bords de l'Escaut sur les bords du Rhin, et passant par Metz dans le dessein de punir ses enemis de la temerité qu'ils avoient eu de venir en Alsace pour tenter de forcer les barrières de cette province, fut attaquée, le 8 Août 1744, d'une maladie dangereuse que le mit aux portes du tombeau" ("Monumens érigés," p. 151). This description is the more humorous inasmuch as the nervousness of Louis XV was notorious. A characteristic description of the dedication of the monument in 1754 is given in Patte, pp. 152 *et seq.* Everybody was there, the nobility, officers, heralds, commissioners, bishops, and the populace. After Lemoyne the sculptor had unveiled the monument, the statue was saluted in ceremonial order by the royal officials and representatives of the three orders of the Estates of Brittany with "une profonde inclination." The bishop announced the privileges conferred by the King, the guns were fired, and the town militia marched past in drill order. Then came a party playing on "tymbales, trompettes, et cors de chasse," followed by carriages covered with garlands and drawn by richly caparisoned horses, from which young men "galamment vêtus" distributed food and wine gratuitously to the populace. Bands of musicians struck up wherever they thought fit. The town was illuminated, the theatre thrown open, and the proceedings terminated with a public ball. The cost to the province of Brittany was about 550,000 livres. Elsewhere people were living on grass.



PLAN OF THE PLACE ROYALE (PLACE DE LA BOURSE), BORDEAUX. BY J. J. GABRIEL (see p. 63)
(FROM PATTE, "MONUMENS ÉRIGÉS")



THE PLACE ROYALE (PLACE DE LA BOURSE), BORDEAUX. BY J. J. GABRIEL (p. 63)
(FROM PATTE, "MONUMENS ÉRIGÉS")

Ill. TO FACE P. 63]

Royaume,"[1] decided to form a Place overlooking the river, and to erect a statue to Louis XV. In 1730 Gabriel was invited to prepare the plans, and he designed a parallelogram 360 feet long by 300 feet wide, with the re-entering angles canted, as in the Place Vendôme. Buildings were ranged round three sides of the Place. To the left was the Hôtel des Fermiers du Roi, now the Douane, to the right the Hôtel de la Bourse. The fourth side, next the river, was to be enclosed by a low wall, at the angle of which four pedestals are marked on the plan. Patte says that at the extremities of the Place two fountains were to be placed, with bronze groups on pedestals representing the Garonne and the Dordogne, with their appropriate attributes, and the two river gods were supposed to be looking with admiration at the equestrian figure which had recently honoured their banks.[2]

In the centre of the Place, which was then called the Place Royale, was the equestrian statue of Louis XV by Lemoyne, and on the side facing the river, the centre building is set back some 40 feet in order to allow two streets (the Rue Royale and the Rue St. Remy) running at acute angles towards the river to join in a broader street opening on to the Place. At the junction of the two streets Gabriel placed a frontispiece with a mansard roof and cupola, reproducing the design of the frontispiece of the right and left pavilions. By this ingenious design he masked the ends of the two streets which would otherwise have run out to a point, carried through the motive of the whole design, and provided an excellent background for the equestrian statue. The design of the façade presents the familiar motive of a rusticated arcade, supporting an Ionic order running through two storeys, with entablatures, balustrade, and mansard roof. It is not remarkable except for its excellent proportion and spacing, and it is the fine quality of the conception as a whole, and as a great monumental design, that places the work of Gabriel both here and at Rennes, and Héré's at Nancy, among the masterpieces of eighteenth-century architecture. The contract for the equestrian statue, made in 1731 by Gabriel with Lemoyne, was for 130,000 livres for the statue fixed complete within four years. The first stone of the pedestal was laid in 1733 by Boucher, *Intendant* of Guienne, accompanied by the Sous-Maire, the Jurats, and others, to

[1] Patte, p. 138. Bordeaux also possessed an academy of "Sciences, Belles Lettres et Arts" of its own, established by Letters Patent in 1712.

[2] These fountains were not carried out; the existing fountain in the centre of the place is modern (1869), and it is not known what became of the royal statue after it was pulled down in 1792.

the usual discharge of musquetry and cannon, and Gabriel's name was engraved with those of the city dignitaries on the inscription-plate placed on the pedestal stone. The casting of the statue gave a lot of trouble. It was intended to cast the complete statue, horse and all, "d'un seul jet," in bronze, as had been done by Keller, the famous Swiss founder,[1] forty years before, but nobody knew how to set about it. Boffrand, the architect, had seen Keller at work and offered his services, but when it came to the point it appears that his memory was at fault. The consequence was that the first casting was a failure, either the iron bar intended to carry the tail gave way, or there was too much metal in the tail. Anyhow, the mould opened at this point, and the molten metal ran out, deserting the upper part of the figure, and filling up solid the feet and lower part of the horse and the legs of the King. Lemoyne had to make a fresh model in wax of the upper part, and Verrin, the founder, succeeded in re-establishing the mould, cast the upper part *in situ*, and joined the two parts together successfully. It was a skilful piece of work, yet it seems that the consummate craftsmanship of the reign of Louis XIV, built up by the sedulous care of Colbert, was already losing ground. The statue was sent by water to Rouen, and thence in one of the royal ships to Bordeaux, and was dedicated in 1743 with the usual elaborate ceremonial, salvoes of artillery, free entertainment, and public ball. Gabriel was dead, but Lemoyne, in spite of his being seven years late with his contract, was publicly thanked by the *Intendant* of Guienne, and even embraced by that eminent person, "pour mettre le comble à ces éloges." This example, says Patte, was followed by the Sous Maire and Jurats, and Lemoyne, having survived this enthusiasm, was further gratified by a gift of 30,000 livres from the town, and the payment of the cost of his journey and all his expenses at Bordeaux. The great French artists of the eighteenth century, at any rate the sculptors and architects, seldom failed to find a most generous appreciation of their labours.

De Tourny, who succeeded Boucher as *Intendant* of Guienne, contemplated further vast schemes for the improvement of the city, and it is probable that the designs were prepared by J. J. Gabriel before his death. A good part of these were carried out between 1743 and 1758, when the scheme was abandoned on account of its cost. Architects in the eighteenth century did not specialize in the manner of modern

[1] The equestrian figure of Louis XIV in the Place Vendôme cast by Jean Bathazar Keller. Keller was shamefully treated in return for this amazingly skilful casting, in which 70,000 pounds of bronze were used. Girardon was the sculptor.

SOUTH TRANSEPT, CATHEDRAL LA ROCHELLE (p. 65)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

practice. Bridges, châteaux, commercial buildings, theatres, churches, all came alike to their net, and thus about the year 1740 Gabriel, the bridge-builder, designed one of the finest eighteenth century churches in France, the Cathedral Church of La Rochelle, on the site of the old Church of S. Barthélemy, which had been destroyed in the seventeenth century with the exception of the tower. A local guide-book, published in 1873, describes Gabriel's building as "une lourde construction de style Grec."[1] There is nothing Greek about it. It is a fine design, simple in treatment, by a man who knew his business, and its great scale is handled throughout with a sure and resolute hand. The buttresses on the exterior stop short of the cornice, so that the latter is carried round in an unbroken sweep, without the irritating breaks which disfigure the buildings of J. H. Mansart. Gabriel had a genuine sense of the great line. In the interior, which is all in dressed white stone, the entablature of the Doric order of the nave is carried all round the church with excellent effect. Gabriel made no attempt at fancy planning. The church has the usual nave and transepts, with side aisles and side chapels beyond on either side. The eastern end is semi-circular, with ambulatory and chapels, and an oval Lady Chapel on the axis line beyond the ambulatory. The original intention seems to have been to build two towers on the western front, but these were never carried higher than the lower storey,[2] and, in fact, unfinished as they are, they group uncommonly well with the rest of the composition. It is possible that Gabriel designed the additions to the Tour de la Grosse Horloge, which faces the inner harbour of Rochelle. The main part of this tower, with its pointed archway and engaged tourelles, dates from the fourteenth century. Its upper part must have disappeared at some period in the stormy history of La Rochelle,[3] and Gabriel appears to have cut off the top sheer and level about two-thirds of the way up.

[1] This guide-book speaks of the church having been begun in 1862, which I take to be a misprint, for the church was certainly designed and carried out by one of the Gabriels, father or son. The west front is almost certainly by the elder Gabriel. The east end appears to be later, and a false start seems to have been made here next the Gothic Tower of the older church, where a Doric order starts but is not continued. The total length of the church inside is about 300 feet and the width of west front about 140 feet.

[2] It is evident that the money ran out. The blocks for carving on the pediment and on the key-block over the main entrance remain uncarved.

[3] The local guide-book above referred to states that as late as 1672 this gateway had its tower surmounted by a belfry covered with lead, machicolations, and tiled conical roofs to the tourelles. The writer describes the eighteenth century addition as "une sorte de pendule de cheminée, sur un modèle Louis XV" (A. Thoreux, 1873).

He capped this with a simple cornice, finished up the two tourelles with admirable trophies of amorini supporting globes, and then proceeded to construct an entirely new clock tower, consisting of arched openings flanked by Ionic pilasters surmounted by a low attic storey, a square-domed roof covered with slates and lead, and a cupola finial and weather-cock. In order to deal with the oblong plan he brought out the lower storey of the clock tower by advanced columns. It is a characteristic and instructive example of the straightforward methods of the eighteenth century. Had Viollet-le-Duc handled the problem a hundred years later he would have produced machicolations, meurtrières, crenellations, and all the other paraphernalia of mediaeval fortification, and the result would have been a bit of stage scenery dismally unconvincing and becoming more ridiculous every year. Gabriel frankly accepted his problem, and being a fine architect and a master of proportion, he produced a composition which hangs together perfectly well, that tells its own story without the least affectation, and is, besides this, a charming piece of architecture.

Gabriel died in 1742 at Fontainebleau. His career had been very successful, and he had come in for his full share of honours. He was ennobled in 1709, becoming an Écuyer and Seigneur de Berney. In 1722 he was made a Chevalier of the Order of S. Michael, in 1735 Premier Architecte du Roi in succession to De Cotte, and in 1737 Inspecteur-Général des Bâtiments du Roi. So far as I can judge from the evidence available, and what is left of his work, he was the ablest architect of his time, perhaps the ablest that had appeared in France since the days of François Mansart. He was an artist of vigorous imagination, competent in all technical details, an architect who, without in any way sacrificing the dignity and breadth of classical design, made it alive and human. Most of his contemporaries seem to have been indifferent to the exteriors of their buildings, and the formalists who followed him in the latter part of the eighteenth century strangled architecture with their dogmatic pedantry. Only one French architect in that century surpassed him, and that was his own son, Ange Jacques Gabriel.

CHAPTER XXI

De la Maire, Aubert, Courtonne, Cartaud

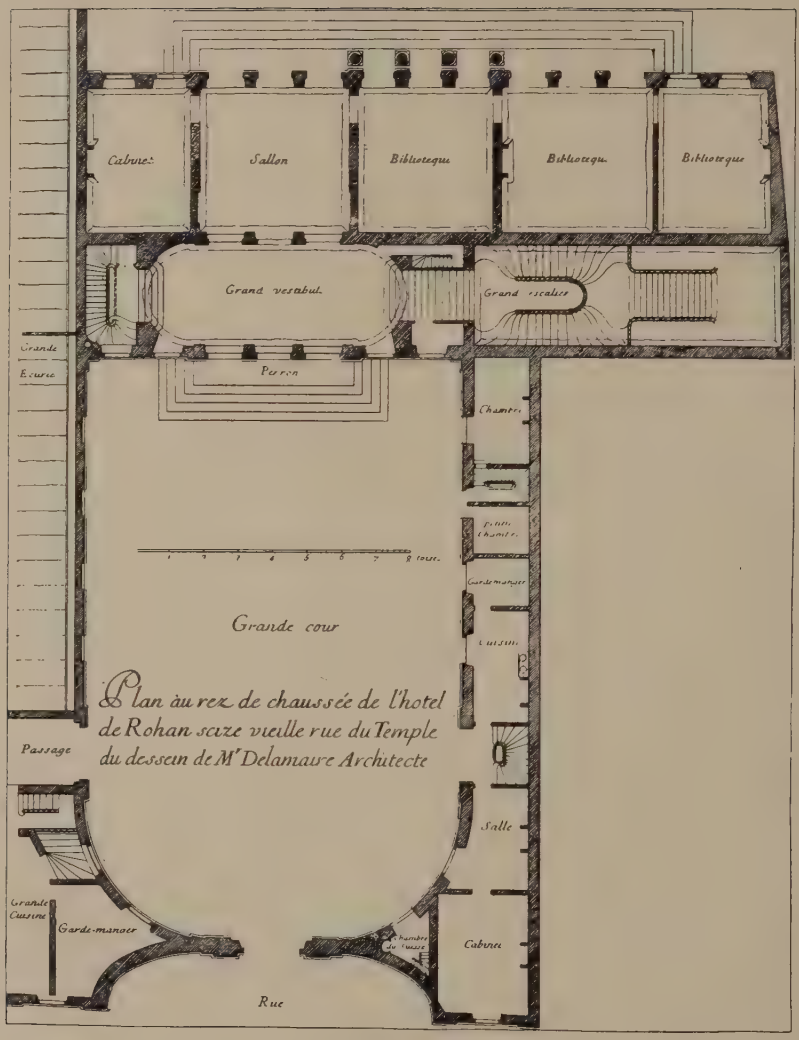
IT is difficult at the present day to realize the attitude of the eighteenth century to the Arts. In this country we are so much occupied with politics and business, that little leisure is left for the Arts. A few well-advertised individuals become popular favourites for a time; but a fashion by no means takes the place of a widespread and sustained interest in the Arts. For all serious purposes, the Arts are treated as a "quantité negligeable" by Governments, and politicians would regard with indifference such magnificent and lasting work as was done by Colbert. Serious Art turns no votes, and the authorities content themselves with half-hearted experiments which leave matters where they were, and waste the money of the taxpayer. At our public schools and universities the Arts are barely considered as a side issue, and they have in recent years been thrust still farther into the background by the overpowering claims—one might even say the insistent self-assertion—of specialized science. It is this dreary specialization that has obliterated the humanism of earlier generations, and made people forget that the graphic and plastic Arts are in their way the expression of human emotion and imagination not less than music and literature. In the eighteenth century the intellectual atmosphere was different. Intelligent and educated people felt as keen an interest in the Arts as in any other work of man, and instead of being taken up with feverish zeal and incontinently dropped, or relegated to a handful of neurotics, the Arts formed a real and pleasant background to the civilized life of the first half of the eighteenth century. That age enjoyed the afterglow of the brilliant days of Colbert. Architecture actually did flourish, both in practice and in its appreciation by intelligent people, to an extent that it has never done before or since in the history of modern Art. Not only was this the case in France and in

England, but even in Sweden and the little German principalities. In studying the history of Architecture in the eighteenth century, one has to bear in mind this condition of things; and one difficulty that results from it for the student, is that he comes across a number of architects highly esteemed in their time, of whom little is known but their names and one or two isolated works. Yet it has to be recollected that these men, living at a time when the standard of attainment was high, were most of them architects of considerable ability, on quite a different footing from those master-builders of the sixteenth century whom I have discussed in a previous work. The three architects whose names head this chapter are cases in point. M. de la Maire, says Blondel,[1] was regarded as an excellent architect. At Paris he built the Hôtels de Soubise, de Rohan, de Duras, and an hotel for M. l'Abbé de Pompadour, which afterwards came into the possession of Mme. la Duchesse de Boufflers. "This architect," continues Blondel, "retired from practice in his latter years, in order to write about architecture; but his manuscripts were not completed at the time of his death, and nobody knew what had become of them. This was the more regrettable, inasmuch as this architect was generally recognized as having "un très grand théorie de l'architecture";[2] and this is about all that is known of Pierre Alexis de la Maire. Herluison gives an entry from the registers of St. Hippolyte of the marriage on 7 February 1709, of Pierre Alexis de la Maire, architecte du Roi, living in the Rue Montorgeuil, in the parish of S. Eustache, aged thirty-three, and son of the late Antoine, "entrepreneur des bâtiments du Roy," with Marie Elizabeth Cloud, daughter of Guillaume Cloud, "entrepreneur des bâtiments du Roi," living in the Faubourg S. Honoré, aged twenty-six. Thus De la Maire was closely connected with the building interests and came of the bourgeois class, as nearly all these considerable architects did. Bauchal says he died at Chatenay, near Paris, in 1745.

De la Maire's reputation really rests on the Hôtel de Soubise and the Hôtel de Rohan, and even here it has been undeservedly diminished by the fame of the decorations executed under the directions of Boffrand, some twenty years later. An architect's reputation, more than that of any other artist's, is affected by luck and accident. Boffrand was the architect of the decorations; yet the whole merit of these depends less on the architect than on the executants—whereas one hears little

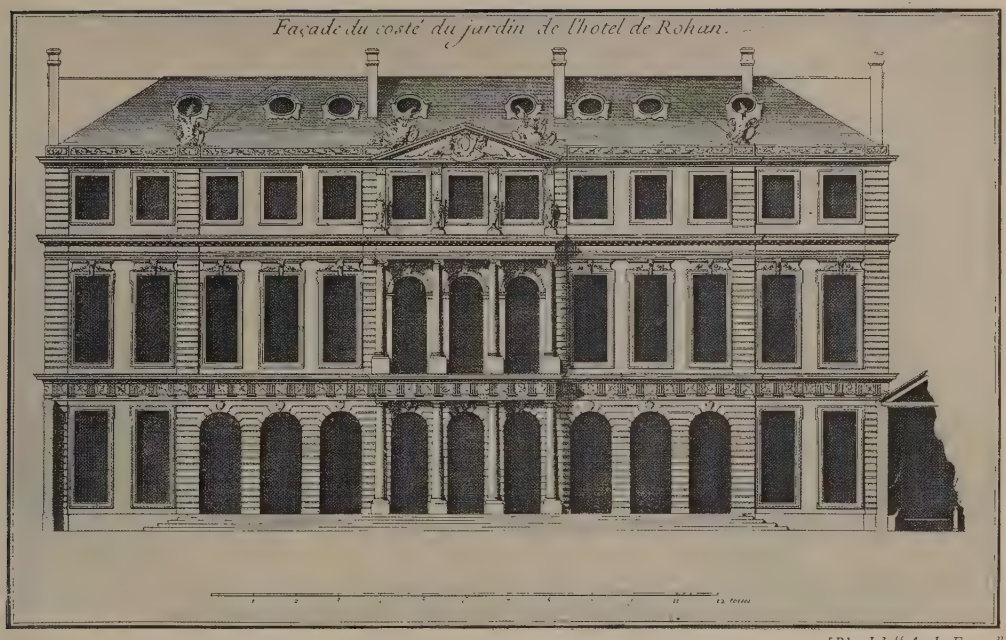
[1] "Arch. Franc.," i, 257.

[2] In his notes on the Hôtel de Soubise, Blondel speaks of "le génie et l'expérience de cet artiste."



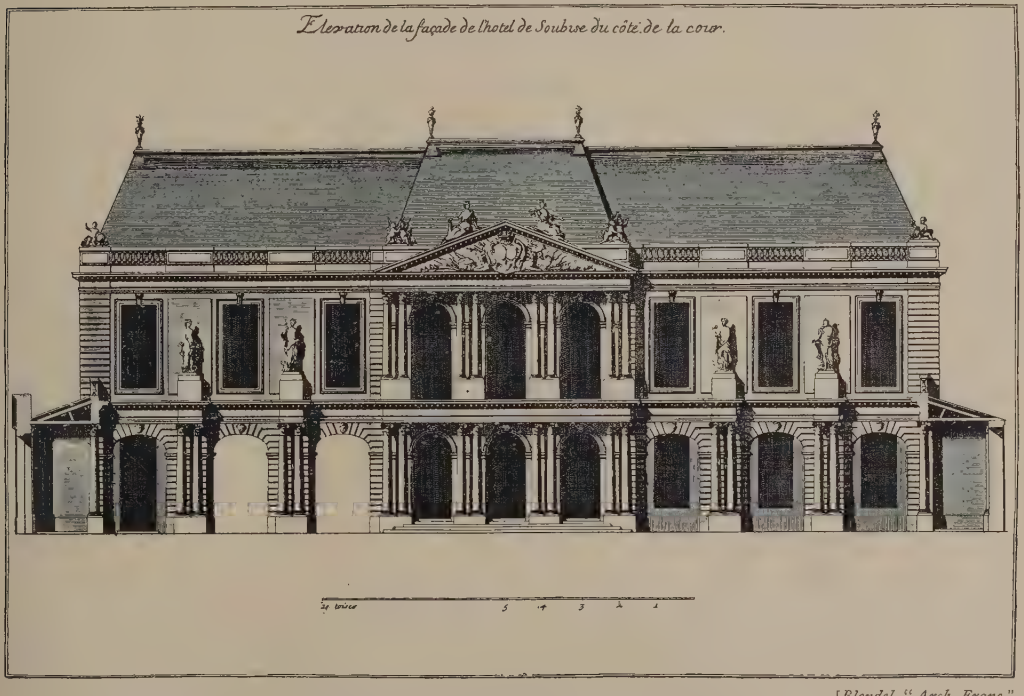
GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE ROHAN. BY DE LA MAIRE (see p. 70)



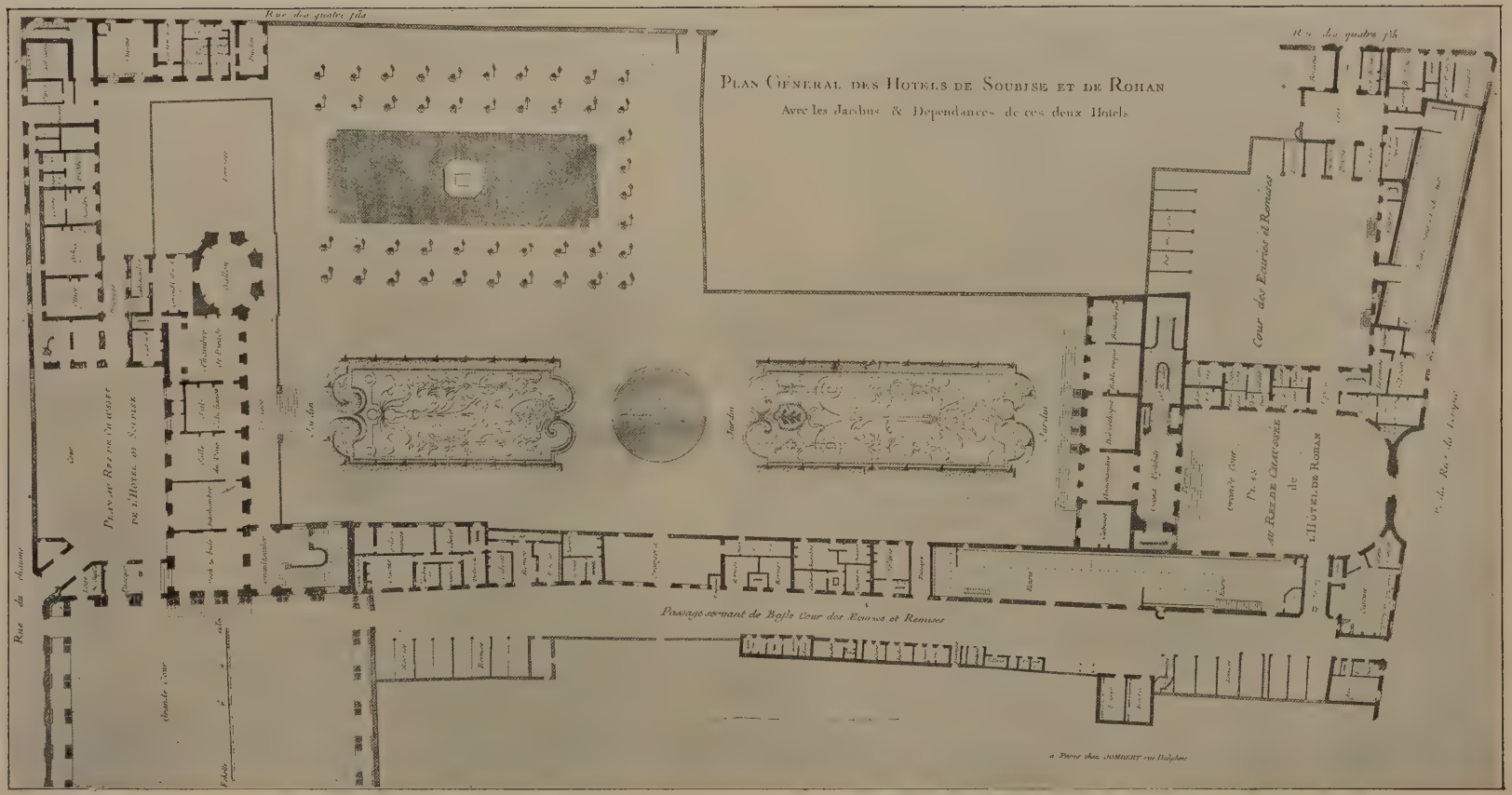
[*Blondel, "Arch. Franc."*

ELEVATION OF THE HÔTEL DE ROHAN FROM THE GARDENS. BY DE LA MAIRE (see p. 70)



[*Blondel, "Arch. Franc."*

ELEVATION OF THE HÔTEL DE SOUBISE FROM THE COURT. BY DE LA MAIRE (see p. 70)


Plan Général des Hotels de Soubise et de Rohan
Avec les Jardins & Dependances de ces deux Hotels
Rue des quatre fils
Rue du chaume
Cour des Ecuries et Remises
Passage formant de Boëtie Cour des Ecuries et Remises
Cour des Ecuries de l'Hotel de Rohan
Jardin
Jardin
Grande Cour
Petite Cour
Cour
Rue du Temple

GENERAL PLAN OF THE HÔTELS DE SOUBISE AND DE ROHAN. BY DE LA MAIRE (see pp. 69, 70)
(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," II, XVIII)

of De la Maire, who designed the building, and whose design for the façade and courtyard of the Hôtel de Soubise is uncommon, and one of the best things of its kind in Paris. Blondel says of it, "nonseulement cet édifice pris en général est un des plus beaux, des plus grandes, et des plus somptueux de Paris, mais aussi l'on peut dire qu'il est un des plus réguliers, des plus commodes, et des plus richement ornés de cette capitale."[1]

The building of the Hôtels de Soubise and de Rohan was the most considerable enterprise of its time in Paris. Till the end of the seventeenth century the site had been occupied by the immense Hôtel de Guise. In 1697 Francis de Rohan, Prince de Soubise, bought the property of the last of the Lorraine Guises, Marie Duchesse de Lorraine et de Joyeuse; and in 1706 the Hôtel de Soubise was begun from the designs of De la Maire, followed soon afterwards by the building of the Hôtel de Rohan. In the first instance, the gardens at the back, and the stables and coach-houses, were used in common; but when Blondel wrote, separate stables had recently been built for the Hôtel de Rohan, next the Vielle Rue du Temple, for the Cardinal Armand Gaston de Rohan. The site was irregular and awkward, and further complicated—in the case of the Hôtel de Soubise—by the walls of the earlier building, parts of which, at any rate, were preserved.[2]—Brice ("Desc. de Paris," ii, 88), says the new façade was "plaquée sur le vieux bâtiment pour en cacher la diformité."[3]

De la Maire dealt with this site in a masterly way, particularly in the Hôtel de Soubise, with its fine court and façade. He threw the house back from the *grande cour*, returning it along the further side of the *basse cour* and again returning it beyond, so that the house was very well lit on every side. The wing entered from the *grande cour* with the grand staircase to the right, was occupied on both floors by the principal rooms *en suite*, ending with the oval salons, so planned that the long axis of the oval came on the axis line of the enfilade of the suite of rooms. The *salle-à-manger* was on the first floor at the further corner of the house, but it was served directly by a service-stairs from the very complete set of kitchens and offices on the

[1] "Arch. Franc.," ii, 155. The "archives nationales" were placed in the Hôtel de Soubise in 1808, and the "Imprimerie nationale" established at the Hôtel de Rohan in the same year.

[2] *E.g.*, the engaged tourelle at the angle of the building next the street.

[3] The phrase is repeated verbatim and without any acknowledgment in Piganiol de la Force, iv, 336.

ground-floor immediately below. Blondel explains the unusual character of the façade to the Court, by the necessity De la Maire was under of preserving the old walls and openings. In consequence, unlike other buildings of the time, and unlike De la Maire's own designs of the façade of the Hôtel de Rohan, the solid piers are considerably wider than the window openings; and Blondel suggests that the use of coupled columns on this façade was dictated by the same reason. Whatever the reason, the result is architecturally very satisfactory; the building is more restful and dignified than any other façade of its time. Blondel greatly admired it, but criticized the undue width of the frontispiece, and a much more serious fault, the use of elliptical arches in the wings, in immediate proximity to the semicircular arches of the centre; and he points out with justice that where arches occur in rusticated walls, it is a mistake to use impost mouldings at the springing of the arches; and still more to carry them through behind the columns, because this stultifies the proportions of the columns. It is not so easy to follow him in his objection to the steep-pitched slate roof which offended his sense of classical form: "La hauteur démesurée des combles, dont nos architectes François du dernier siècle et ceux du commencement de celui-ce ont fait parade dans leur édifices, sans autre nécessité réele, que l'opinion dans laquelle ils étoient que ces couvertures ainsi élevées étoient un genre de beauté." Blondel, fine critic as he was, was overpowered by his Academic theory. It was only a step from this disapproval of the traditional roof to the flat-pitched roof, and, finally, to the flat roofs, which are always a source of trouble and expense, and this particular pedantry lost to French architecture one of its most characteristic features. The Hôtel de Rohan is by no means so attractive as the Hôtel de Soubise. Its *grande cour* is much smaller,[1] and instead of the low, restful lines of the Hôtel de Soubise, it is surrounded by a lofty building of three storeys, the proportions of which are the exact opposite of the Hôtel de Soubise, being tall and narrow, one might say, almost gawky. De la Maire made his chief effort on the façade to the garden, where the height was less material, but here, too, the openings are too large for the solid piers, the façade is all windows, and though light is very important, as Blondel puts it in his formal way, "il convient de concilier l'ordonnance de

[1] The dimensions of the *grande cour* of the Hôtel de Rohan (as given by Blondel) are 102 ft. long by 66 ft. wide; and the façade scales 57 ft. from the ground to the top of the blocking course. The *grande cour* of the Hôtel de Soubise is described as 183 ft. long by 132 ft. wide, exclusive of the colonnades, $8\frac{1}{4}$ ft. deep on either side of the court; and the height from the ground to the top of the balustrade scales 47 ft.

dehors avec la distribution de dedans, de sorte que le grand, le noble, et le majestueux, puissent s'accorder avec l'utile le commode et l'agréable."[1]

The only other known work in Paris by De la Maire was the Hôtel de Pompadour in the Rue de Grenelle, built for the Abbé de Pompadour. The building is of one storey, and well planned for a bachelor establishment. There was direct access under cover from the kitchen to the *salle-à-manger*, and the latter, instead of being poked away in a corner as usual, is one of the principal rooms of the house entered from the chief vestibule, and also from the "Chambre de Parade." The axis line of the "avant cour" does not come central on the site owing to the necessity of providing a *basse cour* for the stables immediately to the right of it. De la Maire succeeded more or less in masking the difference between the axis on the court side and the axis on the garden side, and though his entrance front is very poor, produced a fairly satisfactory façade on the garden side.[2] It is not, however, a remarkable design in any way, and De la Maire's reputation has to rest on the Hôtel de Soubise.[3]

Of Jean Aubert scarcely more is known than of De la Maire, yet he, too, was a considerable architect. No record remains of his origin or training. In the "Comptes" two Auberts "dessinateurs" are mentioned, in 1699, as in receipt of 100 francs apiece for forty days' work as draughtsmen at Versailles and Marly. In 1700-1 an Aubert is mentioned with D'Orbay (*fils*) as in regular employment as a draughtsman at 50 sous a day. In 1702 he travels in the service of the King with Carlier (afterwards employed by De Cotte), and again works with D'Orbay as a draughtsman by the day, but in 1703 he seems to have been employed as a regular draughtsman in the "service des bâtiments"[4] at the usual salary of 1,200 francs per annum. Entries appear in the "Comptes" for travelling expenses between Paris, Meudon, Versailles and Marly, from which it appears that Mansart, at any rate, was usually accompanied by his staff. Aubert continued in this employment till

[1] "Arch. Franc.," ii, 162.

[2] The central frontispiece is in two bays, with the result that instead of an opening on the axis line it is blocked by a pier with engaged and coupled columns.

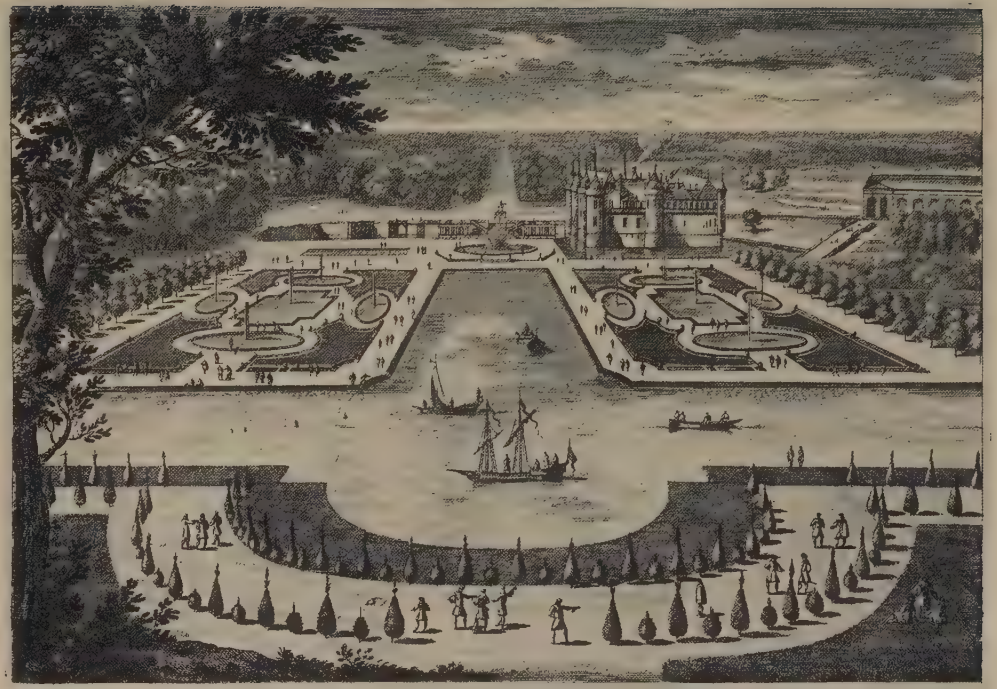
[3] M. Marcel, "Inventaire de R. de Cotte," p. 148, says that De la Maire also designed the Château de Saverne, which was altered by De Cotte, for the Cardinal Prince Bishop n 1727-30, and destroyed in 1779.

[4] "Comptes," iv, 912, 1018. He also received with Rivet and Carlier, 300 francs "par gratification." In the index to the "Comptes" these are all referred to the elder Aubert, but there is no evidence to show whether it was the elder or younger.

1708, after which he disappears from the "Comptes." It is probable that the Aubert mentioned in these entries is Jean Aubert, the architect, and that he learnt his design in the great school of the Royal Buildings, under Mansart's, and more particularly De Cotte's, direction. Here he found himself in the company of such men as L'Assurance, the elder, and D'Orbay, the younger; and as the evidence which I have collected in my account of J. H. Mansart shows, a great deal of the responsible designs, and probably all the working drawings, were in the hands of Mansart's staff. L'Assurance evidently thought well of Aubert, for after the death of L'Assurance, Aubert carried on his designs for the Hôtel de Lassay. Blondel says this building was constructed in 1724 from the designs of M. de L'Assurance "et sous la conduite de M. Aubert." Aubert designed the "porte cochère" of the Hotel, and according to Blondel it was full of faults, "sans proportions et sans graces." He thought the columns too small for the semicircular return of the cornice above the entablature, with its heavy trophy, a feature which Blondel invariably condemns. In this case it was made worse by the low elevation of the courtyard walls on either side, which made no attempt to stand up to the great mass over the columns. Aubert was also employed to superintend the execution of the elder Gabriel's designs for the Hôtel de Moras, in the Rue de Varenne, but Blondel says of this house, that the whole of its construction had been very carelessly done, and the inside was better than the outside. Blondel apparently thought little of Aubert, and even criticizes unfavourably his splendid work at Chantilly for its want of "vraisemblance," referring to the arcade of the stables, which was only a screen, and carried nothing. If he had applied this criticism to Mansart's absurd Colonnade in the gardens of Versailles he would have been justified; but even Blondel seems to have been paralysed by the stupendous success of Jules Hardouin Mansart.

Aubert's work on the stables of Chantilly is more brilliant than anything by Mansart at Versailles, and though not nearly so extensive, its scale is finer than any building at Versailles, except the orangery. Henri Jules de Bourbon, son of the Grand Condé,[1] bought the ground for a vast establishment of stables before his death in 1709, his son died in 1710, and the work was finally carried out by his grandson, Louis Henri, Duc de Bourbon, born 1692. The Duke was immensely rich, not only by inheritance, but also through the opera-

[1] See "Chantilly et le Musée Condé," by Gustave Macon, chapter vii.



LE CANAL DE CHANTILLY

A Paris chez N. Langlois rue St. Jacques a la Victoire Avec Privilege du Roy.

Perelle

CHANTILLY (p. 72. See also VOL. I, PL. XXXIX)

tions of Law, and having lost his political influence and position, devoted his wealth to the extension and further adornment of Chantilly. Saint-Simon says that the expenditure of his grandfather (the Grand Condé) on Chantilly, 1687-1709, "ont été des bagatelles en comparaison des trésors que son petits-fils y a enterrés." The Duke began with the Château itself, and the works were started in 1718.[1] The old Chapel was destroyed and a new one built in its place, oval in plan, with a choir running out of its longer side, a plan afterwards adopted by Boffrand in the Chapel of the Episcopal Palace at Wurzburg, with the difference of a nave instead of a choir. The entrance front of the Château was refaced and the entrance itself "rebâtie à la moderne et ornée de sculptures,"[2] a new grand staircase was constructed, and the side facing the Petit Château rebuilt. The result seems to have been very unattractive, but it gave the Duke a greatly increased accommodation on a contracted site, and the interior, with its superb tapestries, its hunting scenes by Wouvermans and Van der Meulen, and its fine collection of pictures, must have been magnificent. The Petit Château, though it was only thirty years since it had been rehabilitated by the Grand Condé, was entirely redecorated, the Duke's favourite artists being Oudry, Desportes and Huet, the master of *singeries* and *chinoiseries*.

Meanwhile, the Duke had succeeded in realizing an enormous fortune by speculations under Law's "System," just before the collapse of that financier in 1720, and this he proceeded to spend on his new stables at Chantilly. The Grandes Écuries were, and are to this day, by far the most remarkable feature of Chantilly, and I know no building which gives a more vivid impression of the prodigious state of the great French noblemen of the eighteenth century. The principal building is 579 feet long by 56 feet wide, by 42 feet 6 inches high;[3] at each end is a pavilion 65 feet square by 42 feet 6 inches high from the ground level to the entablature, above which is a balustrade 6 feet high. In the centre is the principal pavilion, 87 feet wide, and projecting 15 feet from the face of the building. The angles are canted, and the entrance arch is 56 feet high by 35 feet wide. The great entrance door formed within this archway is 30 feet high by 16 feet wide. The height to the entablature is 63 feet, and the height of the pavilion roof above this

[1] M. Macon says that Aubert had already carried out work at Saint Maur for the Condé family (p. 133). The whole of this chapel was destroyed and its site is now occupied by the Escalier d'honneur.

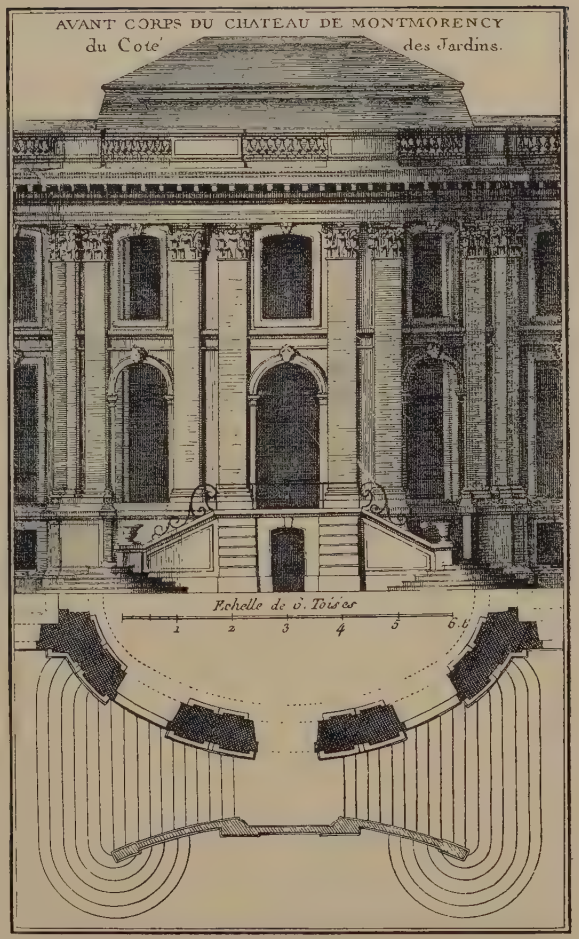
[2] Piganiol de la Force.

[3] These dimensions and details are given in Piganiol de la Force, "Nouv. Desc. des environs de Paris," ix, 82, ed. 1765.

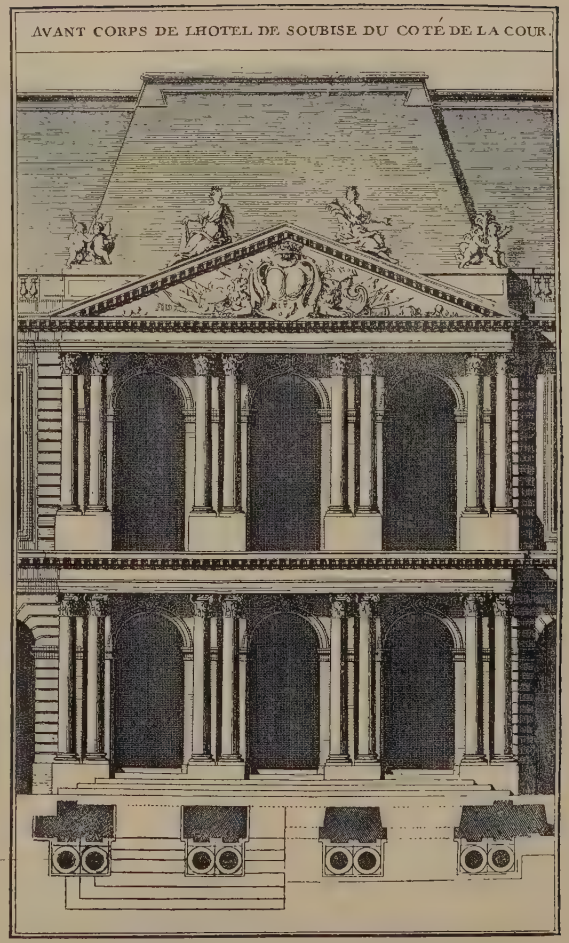
30 feet up to the great moulding[1] at the intersection of the steep part of the roof with the flatter slope at the top. From this moulding again to the platforms formed at the top of the pavilion roof is another 13 feet, and on this stood "le cheval de Renommée" in lead, 12 feet high. The roof is richly decorated with mouldings, consoles and "agrafes" in heavy lead. On the smaller sides of the roof are lead-covered oval lucarnes. According to Piganiol's dimensions, the total height to the top of the roof of the central pavilion is 106 feet, exclusive of the horse that once stood on the top. The internal dimensions of the stable are given as 558 feet by 36 feet wide by 40 feet 6 inches from the floor to the underside of the vaulting, but under the central pavilion the cupola is some 63 feet in diameter and 82 feet high. The stables are lit by windows 21 feet high by 7 feet wide. This enormous building provided stalls for 240 horses. Down the centre was a passage 14 feet wide, and Piganiol gives the curious information that the stall divisions were 4 feet apart, centre to centre, closed in at the ends by a wooden "ailerons" adorned with sculpture. What the wretched horses must have done with themselves after a long day's hunting it is difficult to imagine. The hunter of the time was a substantial animal, and if he once got down in his stall he could not get up again. Apparently all he could do was to lean against the stall division. With a vicious horse the danger to grooms of being crushed must have been considerable, yet even this absurd dimension is 6 inches to a foot wider than the width of the stall divisions shown in nearly all the plans of stables for town houses of the time. Piganiol de la Force comments with the acid intolerance of the amateur on the unreasonable height of the building,[2] and its consequent cold in winter, but 240 horses packed 4 feet apart would provide a heat of its own, and even 40 feet may not have been too high for a stable without any means of ventilation and probably most of the windows permanently closed. The building is richly decorated with ornament and sculpture of a bold and vigorous description. Trophies of the chase, horses and hounds, stags and wild boars adorned the walls, and the Duke, being an ingenious amateur himself, appears to have made experiments in colour, for according to

[1] "Le boursault de bresis," Piganiol. See Daviler, "Explication des termes": "Boursseau = moulure ronde sur la panne de bresis [angle] d'un comble d'ardoise coupé, qui est recouverte de plombe blanchi."

[2] Piganiol de la Force says of the Ecurie de Chantilly, "Cette Écurie d'une grandeur immense et remarkable par sa belle construction et sa decoration, l'est encore plus par le defaut de sens et de raisonnement dans l'architecte qui l'a bâtie."



FRONTISPIECE—CHÂTEAU DE MONTMORENCY. BY J. S. CARTAUD
(see p. 79)



FRONTISPIECE—HÔTEL DE SOUBISE. BY DE LA MAIRE
(see p. 70)

(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE," VIII)

Piganiol, some of the figures were coloured to the life, and in the basin of the fountain in the recess on the opposite side to the main entrance there once stood two horses in lead as large as life, apparently drinking and attended by two children. All these and "le cheval de la Renommée," that topped the central pavilion, disappeared at the Revolution. Above this fountain is the inscription: "Louis Henri de Bourbon, Septième Prince de Condé, a fait contruire cette écurie, et les bâtiments qui én dépendent, commencées en 1719 et finis[1] 1735." Between the central pavilion and the pavilion in the range of buildings opposite, is the "manége découvert," with semi-circular façade on a diameter of 120 feet and open arcades, carrying on the design of the stables. Beyond the "manége" is the "Cour de Quinze Remises." In addition there were the harness rooms, lodgings for the controller of the stable, the "délivereur de fourrage," the armourer and the smith, with his workshop and his assistants, the coachmen, postilions, and innumerable grooms and stable hands. Attached to the stables were the kennels with separate bakehouse, kennels for the staghounds, with lists of all stags taken by the pack since 1716, winter kennels, kennels for the boarhounds, lodgings for the kennel men, and for the "piqueurs and valets de limiers"; a separate establishment was provided for the gentlemen and officers of the stables and kennels.[2]

The cost of this enormous establishment must have been prodigious, and it is difficult to place oneself at the point of view of the man, however rich, who could sanction this expenditure on stables and kennels. The Duc de Bourbon, great nobleman though he was, had not been above enriching himself by unscrupulous speculation in the Mississippi Company, and having made an immense fortune with the help of Law, contributed materially to his downfall by realizing his securities in cash to an amount said to have exceeded some 20 millions of francs.[3] This was in January 1720, and there can be no doubt that the stables at Chantilly were built with this money, and are a lasting monument of Law's ill-fated schemes. Within a year of this date Law was a fugitive beyond the frontier with half a dozen louis in his pocket.

The details of ornament and sculpture in the stables of Chantilly

[1] As a matter of fact the building was never completed. The fourth pavilion and some of the sculpture were left unfinished when the Duke died in 1740 and have remained so ever since.

[2] Piganiol de la Force, p. 102, "Gentilhommes, Ecuyers et autres officiers de l'Écurie et des chenils."

[3] About 4 million sterling. See M. Carrè, "Histoire de France" (ed. Lavisse) VIII, ii, 34.

are as lavish as anything at Versailles, and in many ways more attractive and accomplished. Aubert certainly availed himself of his opportunity up to the hilt, and whatever one may think of his design from the point of view of practical utility, he succeeded in producing one of the finest monumental buildings of France; a building which, more than any other, expresses the idea of the veritable grand Seigneur, mean fellow though he happened to be in this particular case. It is only fair to Aubert as an artist to regard the stables of Chantilly as the deliberate expression of that idea, and the criticism aimed at it by the deplorable commonsense of Piganiol de la Force is beside the mark.

The Hôtel de Moras ou Madame la Duchesse du Maine,[1] which has been attributed to Aubert, was in fact originally designed by the elder Gabriel in 1728, and Blondel says it was built "sous le conduite de M. Aubert." It is difficult to say quite what this means. In 1728 the position of Aubert was scarcely inferior to that of Gabriel, and one can only suppose that the two men were associated in the work on more or less equal terms. Though also found in the work of Gabriel, perhaps the fantastic design of the corbels under the balcony of the garden front was due to Aubert, and shows the influence of the fashionable decorator Gilles Marie Oppenord. It is not an attractive design, and rococo detail such as this may account for the poor opinion held of him by Blondel. Aubert was a "contrôleur des bâtiments du Roi," and became a member of the Academy in 1720. He died in 1741.[2] Judging by his work at Chantilly he must have been a very able architect, and less than justice has been done to his reputation.

Courtonne and Cartaud, well-known architects in their time, are now almost forgotten. Jean Courtonne was born in Paris in 1671. He designed the Hôtel de Matignon in the Rue de Varenne in 1721, and the Hôtel de Noirmoutier in the Rue de Grenelle in 1724. He issued a treatise on perspective with remarks on architecture in 1725. In 1728 he was an "architecte du Roi," was elected an academician of the second class; he succeeded the younger Bruand as Professor of Architecture in 1730, died in 1739, and this is all that is known about him. Blondel thought well of his build-

[1] This hotel, originally built for M. de Moras, was sold in 1736 to the Duchesse du Maine, became the Hôtel de Biron in 1789, a prison under the Terror, and is now the Convent of Sacré Cœur, 77 Rue de Varenne. I have already referred to it in chap. xx.

[2] In the list of architect members given in "Archives de l'Art Français," i, 421, there appears in addition to Jean Aubert, d. 1741, another "Aubert," "dessinateur du roi," elected in 1725.

ings. Of the Hôtel de Matignon,[1] he says, "un des beaux Hôtels de Paris, soit par sa grandeur, sa disposition, et la regularité de sa distribution, soit par la richesse de meubles." Both in plan and elevation it is one of the most attractive designs in Blondel's collection. The difference of axis line between the front to the *grande cour* and the front to the garden is skilfully managed, and the plan, with its fine enfilade through the principal rooms on the garden front, the oval vestibule and its well considered domestic arrangements, is very able. The *salle-à-manger* is well placed both for the house and for access from the kitchen and offices, and instead of mixing up the domestic offices and the stables, a not uncommon fault in these eighteenth century plans, Courtonne kept the stables well away on the further side of a stable court of reasonable size. Courtonne, it appears, was a bold constructor. The oval vestibule, measuring 24 feet by 21 feet, was covered in by a stone vault with a total rise of only 16 inches,[2] and the landing of the great staircase, 32 feet long, was carried by a very shallow arch "que suspend en l'air cette grande portée avec autant de surprise que solidité." I have already called attention to these remarkable vaultings in the Appendix on the flat vaulting of the Roussillon. The construction of these great staircases without any supporting wall on the side next the well was among the most astonishing feats of masonry ever done, and both in setting out and in stereotomy the French architects and masons were incomparable masters. In the elevations Courtonne dispensed with orders and relied on rustications and the customary ornament of the time of a rococo character. With many good points, there is some bad spacing on the first floor of the wings facing the court, and on the garden side the windows are rather crowded, and the end wings have two window openings, with the objectionable result of a blank wall in the centre. Blondel considered that the design showed a neglect of "rapport" and a want of "application."[3] It is not always easy to get at Blondel's point, but I take him to mean that the elevations showed the want of a consecutive idea running through the entire design and bringing the parts together into

[1] Was the Austrian Embassy, 57 Rue de Varenne.

[2] This is not shown in the section given by Blondel, which shows a joist floor and a flat ceiling.

[3] "Arch. Franc.," i, 221. "Ce défaut d'application est la source de presque toutes les fautes qui se remarquent dans les édifices érigés par quelques architectes modernes, elles ne proviennent sans doute que de ce qu'étant trop peu instruits des principes de leur art, ils imitent servilement ce qu'ils ont aperçu dans nos édifices de réputation." "Imitations sans discernement" are not unknown to-day.

a harmonious whole. It appears that Courtonne did not complete the building, and the entrance was designed by some other architect, on whose disloyalty to his colleague, Blondel comments with well merited severity. When an architect is called in in this way, one might hope, he says, that he would have sufficient delicacy of feeling either to refuse to act, or "en case de quelque circonstance particulière," to consult the original designer and follow out his intentions. The decorations of the Hôtel de Matignon are well known as among the finest of their kind in Paris; they are in some ways more subtle and delicate even than those of the Hôtel de Soubise.[1]

The Hôtel de Noirmoutier[2] in the Rue de Grenelle was built in 1724. It is a less important building, and the plan is not remarkable, except for the convenient planning of the first floor with a central corridor, lit at the ends, running from end to end of the house, the first of its kind I have come across. Curiously enough Courtonne did not avail himself of this to provide independent access to the two principal rooms. The elevations are more satisfactory than those of the Hôtel de Matignon, though Blondel considered them somewhat licentious, and objected to the balcony over the entrance, as more suitable to a theatre than to a civil building. In his extreme conscientiousness as a professor, Blondel sometimes became an unmitigated prig.

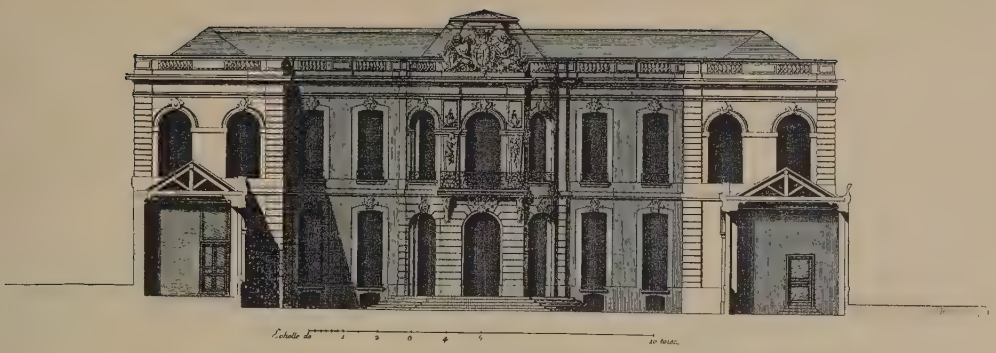
Jean Silvain Cartaud was born in 1675. In April 1695 Villacerf[3] wrote to La Teulière at Rome, "Il part pour Rome trois jeunes garçons qui y vont a leurs frais et dépens pour s'instruire; l'un se nomme Frémin, sculpteur, l'autre Favanne, peintre, et le troisieme Cartot, je ne sais pas sa profession." Villacerf commended them to the care of La Teulière, adding that if peace was made, he would rather put them in the Academy than others who might be sent from Paris. Cartaud got into difficulties. "Quelques[4] tracasseries de famille avoient mis ce jeune homme dans une situation d'autant plus embarrassante qu'il ne jouissoit pas de l'avantage de la Pension." He was on the point of accepting a favourable offer of employment at Constantinople, but was dissuaded by his friend Frémin, the sculptor, who generously helped him out of his own resources, and induced him to hold on first at Rome

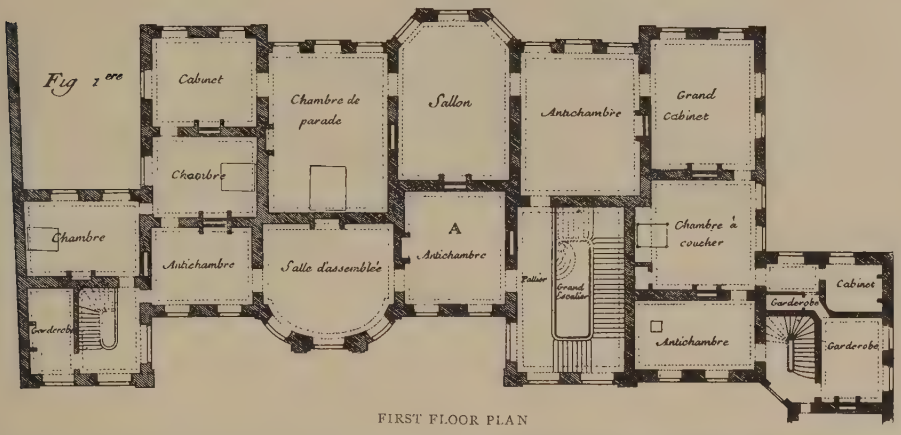
[1] See Vacquier, "Vieux Hôtels de Paris," ii, plates 15-25.

[2] Blondel says that this building is illustrated in Courtonne's "Traité de perspective," but I have so far not succeeded in coming across a copy of this work. The Hôtel de Noirmoutier is now the "Service Géographique de l'armée," 138-40, Rue de Grenelle.

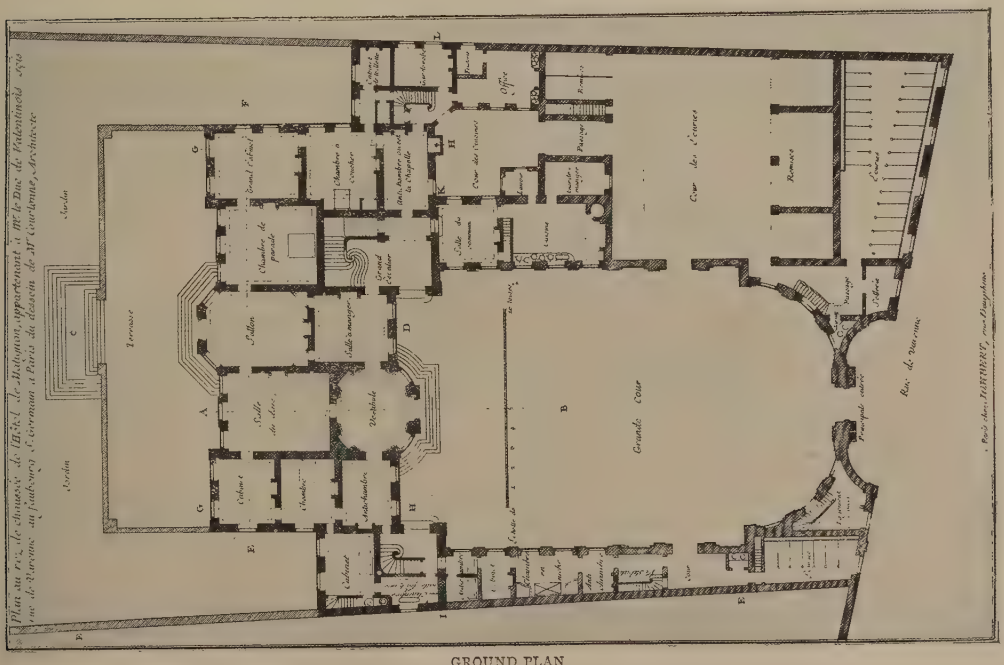
[3] "Corres. des Directeurs," ii, 128.

[4] "Mémoires inédits des Academiciens," ii, 204-5.





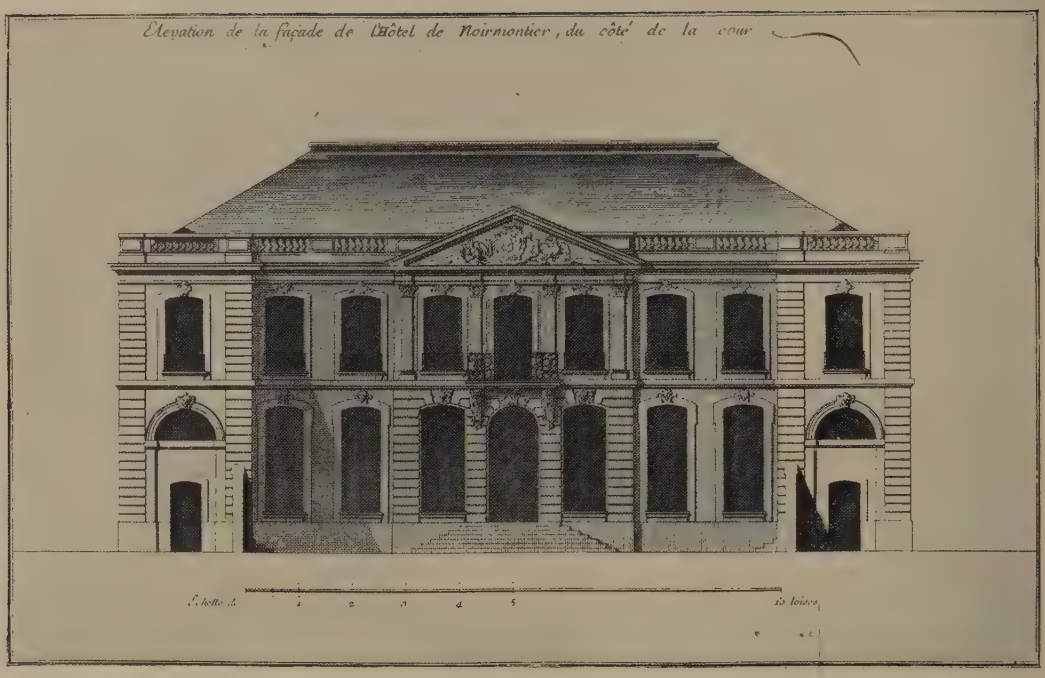
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

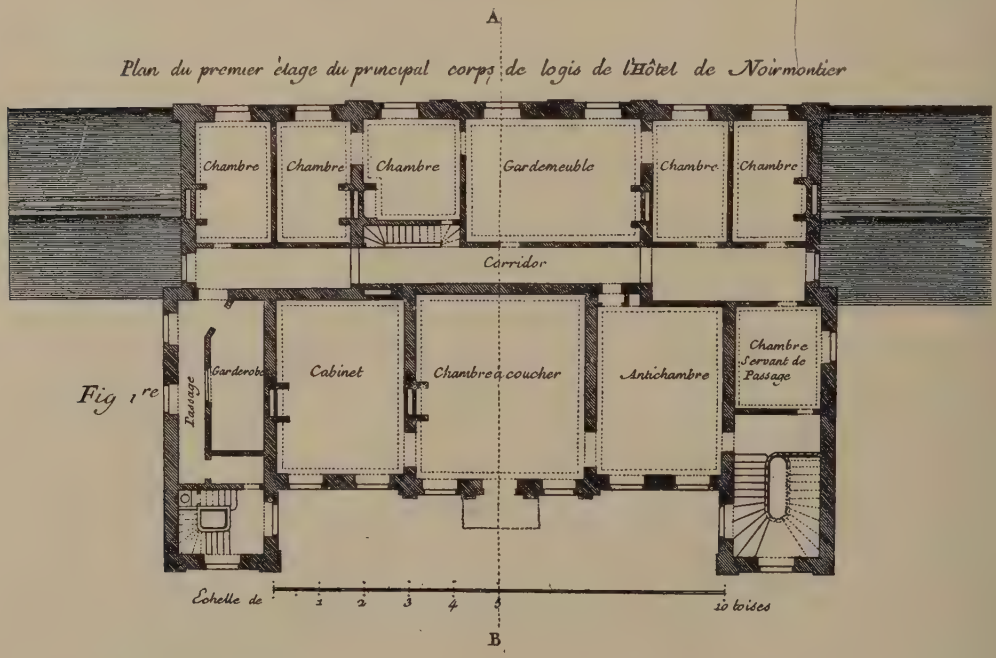

Plan au rez de chaussée de l'Hôtel de Matignon, appartenant à Mr le Duc de Valentinois
Cour des Cuisines
Grande Cour
Rue de Varenne

GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE MATIGNON. ELEVATION AND PLANS. BY J. COURTONNE (see p. 77)

(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I)





HÔTEL DE NOIRMOUTIER. BY J. COURTONNE. ELEVATION AND FIRST FLOOR PLAN (see p. 78)
(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I)

and then at Paris, where he ultimately became famous. Blondel paid him the rare compliment of naming him with Liberal Bruant as "Architectes d'un veritable talent,"[1] and elsewhere he refers to him as "cet habile homme, un de nos plus célébres architectes." Cartaud appears to have been extensively employed throughout his long life. His principal works included the Hôtel de M. Janvry, houses for M. Crozat le Jeune at Paris and Montmorency, a house for M. Guillot in Paris, the château of Bourneville, the entrance to the church of the Petits-Pères, and of the Barnabites in Paris, the high altar in the Cathedral at Rouen, and Chapels and high altars in churches at Paris. He was architect to the Duc de Berry and later to the Duc d'Orléans, but it was not till he was sixty-seven that he became an Academician, twenty-two years after the election of Aubert, and fourteen years after the election of Ange Jacques Gabriel, who was his junior by twenty-four years. Cartaud died in 1758 at the age of eighty-three. His earliest work seems to have been the entrance to the church of St. Eloy or of the Barnabites, built in 1703,[2] a straightforward composition of an Ionic order above the Doric with rather clumsy consoles to the upper order. Blondel says, "on ne peut trop louer la fierté que se remarque dans les profils de l'ordonnance . . . elle annonce l'experience et la haute capacité de l'architecte qui l'a ordonnée." As the church was destroyed in 1860, we have to take the "fierté" of its design on trust.

The Château of Montmorenci was built in 1708 on high ground four leagues from Paris, bought from the heirs of Le Brun. It is in connection with this building that Blondel says of Cartaud "tous ses ouvrages sont ils marquées au coin de la grandeur de la noblesse et de la simplicité."[3] About 1739 he was called in to complete the church of the Augustins Dechaussés or "Petits-Pères," begun by Le Muet in 1656, carried on by Liberal Bruant and Gabriel Le Duc, and not finally completed till 1740. Cartaud designed the three west bays with their chapels and the whole of the west front. The "Petits-Pères" was always a dull and depressing church, and Cartaud did little to improve it. Blondel, though he greatly admired Cartaud, considered the design "mesquin," and weak at the angles where a single pilaster "ne nourrit pas assez les parties angulaires," the effect being rendered still worse by the obelisks which Cartaud used instead of urns above the blocking

[1] Blondel, "Cours d'Architecture," iv, xliii.
[2] Piganiol de la Force, "Desc. de Paris," i, 451.
[3] Blondel, "Cours d'Architecture," iii, 102.

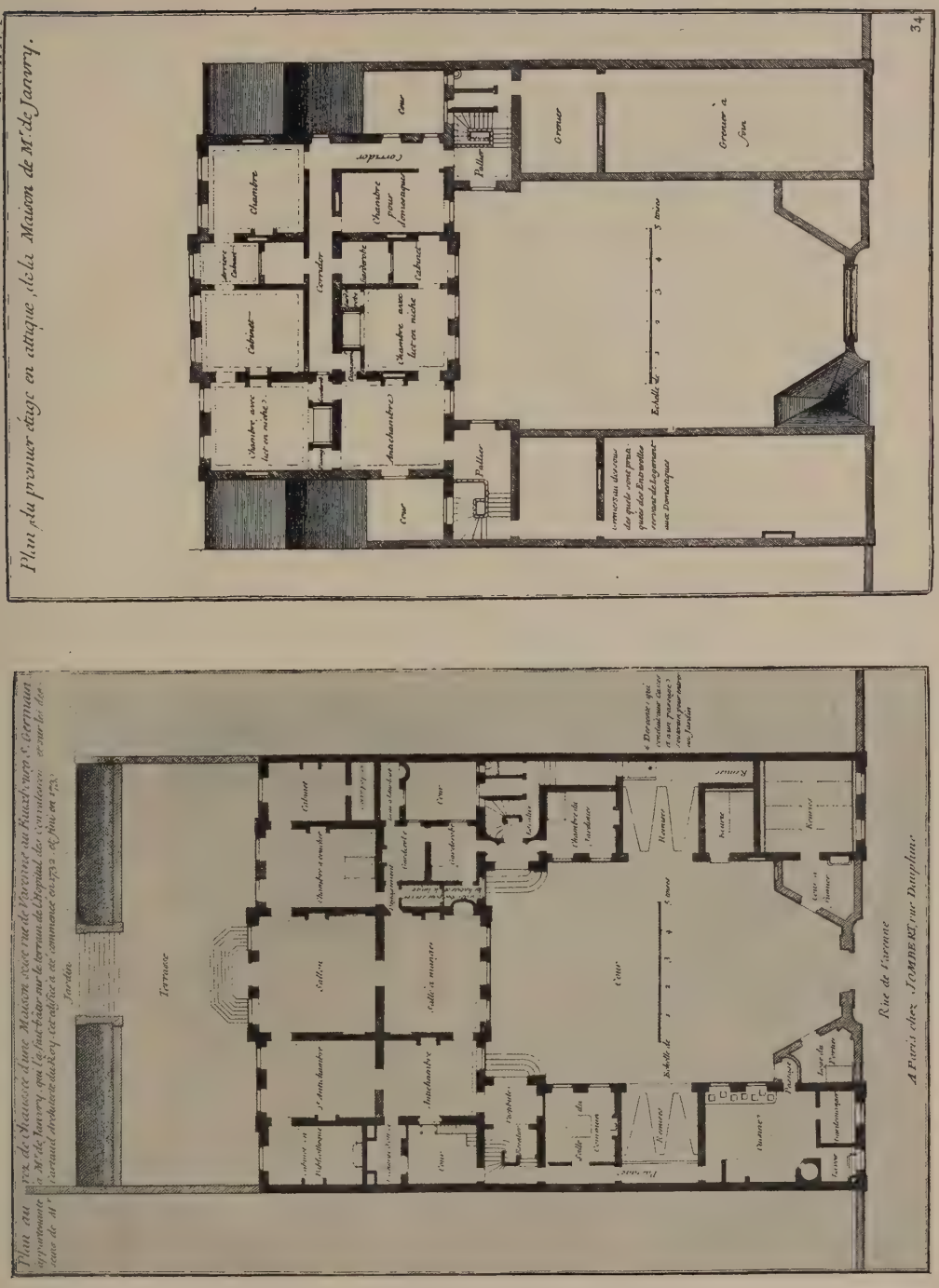
course. Cartaud, no doubt, knew his business, as all these French architects did, but he seems to have been happier in his domestic work. The maison de M. Janvry[1] built 1732-33 was a well-planned town house of moderate size, simply treated. Of its elevation to the garden Blondel says, "l'ordonnance est tres agréable malgré sa simplicité," and shows that an architect of enlightenment, such as Cartaud, with a sound knowledge of proportions, can always make something of a building, however simple. As an illustration of what can be done in the way of sound, but less ambitious architecture, Blondel illustrates the house that Cartaud designed for M. Guillot in 1723-4, a "maison bourgeoise," in which the owner had his shop on the ground floor and lived over it with his family. The house was destroyed in 1850, and Blondel gives no elevation, only plans and a section. From these it appears to have been very well designed for its purpose, and to have shown that "heureuse proportion, excellence de ces profils et beauté de son appareil," which, according to Blondel, characterized all works, great or small, carried out from the designs of Cartaud and under his direction. It is more difficult for an architect to establish a permanent reputation than for any other artist, because his works are not portable. They are liable to destruction and rebuilding, and there is the constant tendency of casual writers to assign all the important works of a given period to one or two leading men whose names they happen to know. All the men that I have dealt with in this Chapter have suffered from these causes, and their reputation has been thrust into the background by men more fortunate but by no means abler than they.

[1] Blondel, "Cours d'Architecture," i, 223.

SECTION THROUGH FORECOURT

HOUSE FOR M. JANVRY. BY J. S. CARTAUD (see p. 80)

(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, vii)


N° VII. Pl. 2.
Plan du premier étage en attique, de la Maison de M.r de Janvry.
Cour
Chambre
Cabinet
Chambre avec lit en niche
Corridor
Chambre pour domestique
Antichambre
Vestibule
Cour
Potager
Cour
Potager
Chambre avec lit en niche
Cabinet
Cabinet
Chambre
Cour
Potager
Cour
Potager
Corridor
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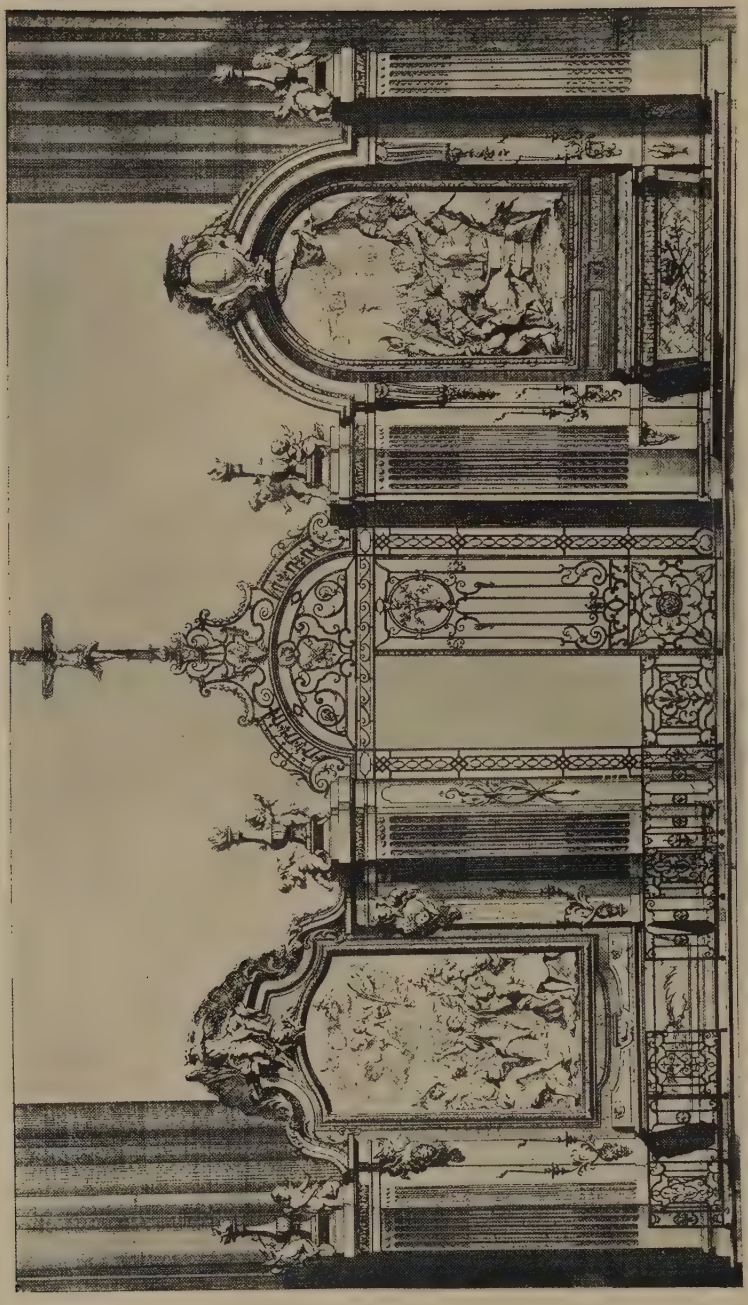
Cabinet
Chambre avec lit en niche
Antichambre
Cour
Potager
Cour
Potager
Echelle de 5 toises



DESIGN FOR THE CHOIR SCREEN AT MEAUX CATHEDRAL, BY G. M. OPPENORD

CHAPTER XXII

Oppenord, Meissonier, The Cuviliés

OUR study of French architecture has brought us to a point at which the great progression shows signs of breaking up, and evidence of decay is becoming apparent, a decay which in two generations will develop into rapid consumption. It owed its origin to parasites to whose attack modern art is peculiarly exposed, namely, the virtuoso and the pattern-book man. The virtuoso of the eighteenth century is not to be confounded with people who appreciate art but are content to leave its practice to artists; he was a man of wealth and high social position, who took upon himself to lay down the law in all matters relating to the arts, and abused his position by the arbitrary promotion of his favourites, and the suppression, so far as lay within his power, of those artists who declined to flatter him or fall in with his caprices, the "noble patron" in his worst form. The Comte de Caylus, to whom I shall return,[1] was a typical example of such a connoisseur and virtuoso, a man of some little minor accomplishment in engraving and antiquarian research, who for some thirty years was allowed by the Academy of Painting and Sculpture to propound *ex cathedra* his absurd theories of the arts. The Academy of Architecture, much to the annoyance of M. de Caylus, had sufficient good sense and strength of mind to decline his advances, but artists in the eighteenth century were much at the mercy of such men as the Comte de Caylus. In England, Wren's latter days were embittered by the malice of Lord Burlington's clique, and though that nobleman did contribute largely to the publication of certain fine architectural folios, both in his case and in that of the Comte de Caylus, a certain arrogant preciosity made architecture academic in the wrong sense and led to the final paralysis of a great and vital tradition. Nowadays the principal danger seems to arise from those who make a living out of art without the capacity

[1] See chap. xxx.

to practise it, and with no first-hand knowledge of its principles and purpose.[1] But in the eighteenth century there was another source of danger for which artists themselves were responsible, and which indeed seems inseparable from architecture since the early days of the Renaissance. Before the days of the printing press and the re-discovery of antiquity, there were no such things as pattern-books. There were well accepted types of ornament, but each man had to carry them out himself his own way. Villard de Honnecourt might fill his sketch book with notes, but they were notes for his own use, and not for general reproduction. The pattern-book was the direct result of the classical scholarship of the Renaissance, and in the first instance it was a legitimate result, necessitated by the blunders of the master-builders over the orders. The information gained by scholars and enthusiastic artists had to be translated into terms of common use, but two dangerous consequences resulted. In the first place the draughtsman began to glory in the exuberance of his skill, and like Du Cerceau, Sambin, De Vries, and others, began to reel off architectural detail of his own extravagant invention. In the second place not only builders and workmen, but architects of inferior taste and knowledge were given the choice of this detail, good, bad, or indifferent, and whereas in less sophisticated times it had never occurred to the artist or the craftsman to work on other lines than those which tradition taught him, the Renaissance introduced research and conscious selection, and though in good hands and the right conditions, this has led to a vast extension and development of the resources of architecture, in inferior hands it inevitably led to the short cut, to tricks of design which can be copied and reproduced indefinitely so long as the fashion for them lasts. Thus came in the pattern-book, rapidly degenerating into the book of fashion plates, and their makers were more dangerous than the virtuoso and the critic, because they sought and found their opportunity among those who practise the arts themselves, persons who by their training at least should have been able to rise superior to this degradation of their art.[2] In nearly every case the predisposing causes are on

[1] Horace, "Epistles," II, i, 114-17:

> "Navim agere ignarus navis timet; abrotonum aegro
> non audet, nisi qui didicit, dare; quod medicorum est,
> promittunt medici: tractant fabrilia fabri:
> scribimus indocti, doctique, poëmata passim."

[2] The immense output of collections of photographs of buildings, furniture, and decorations in recent years has to a large extent taken the place of the issue of pattern books, and is only a degree less mischievous.

the one hand draughtsmen of great facility of invention with little or no taste, and on the other inferior architects, decorators, and tradesmen, in short, the motley host of the camp followers of the arts. It was the business of these people to catch the fashion, or rather, in the case of such men as Oppenord and Meissonnier for a time to make it, and in order to keep up their reputation for originality, they were for ever striving after new and more extravagant forms and combinations, which might look well enough in a dashing sketch of a candelabrum, or a mustard pot, but were grotesquely out of place in the sedate art of architecture.

Gilles Marie Oppenord was a most conspicuous offender in this regard, all the more so because he was a thoroughly trained architect, and appears to have possessed some real ability. He was born in Paris in 1672, the son of Jean Oppenord, a Dutch cabinet-maker in the royal employment.[1] D'Argenville says he was apprenticed to J. H. Mansart, and did so well that at the end of a year Mansart obtained a nomination for him in the French Academy at Rome, where he spent the next eight years in the study of architecture and decoration.[2] Oppenord was just twenty when he arrived in Rome. In July 1692, La Teulière, the Director, wrote to Colbert de Villacerf: "Le Sr. Openhor est un joli garçon [3] qui dessine de bon goust et avec intelligence ce qu'il fait. Il a autant d'application qu'on en peut avoir; j'ay esté obligé de luy dire de la modérer un peu pendant les grandes chaleurs. Je ne croy pas, Monsieur, qu'il soit jamais capable de vous donner lieu de vous repentir de tout le bien que vous luy fairez ou procurerez." La Teulière says that Oppenord took a lodging close to the Academy, and that he had allowed him to take his meals with the pensionaries. It thus appears that he was not, in fact, a pensionary [4] elected on his work by the Academy of Architecture, but was allowed to attach himself to the School in Rome on the nomination of the Surintendant, who always reserved this right on behalf of the Crown.

In October 1692 La Teulière reported that Oppenord was forming

[1] Oppenord, the father, "ébeniste," is frequently mentioned in the "Comptes." He received the regular retaining fee of the royal tradesmen of thirty francs per ann. and was paid for his works separately. He was a native of Gueldres, and obtained his letters of naturalization in 1679 ("Nouv. Archives," 1873, p. 258).

[2] As a matter of fact he was in Rome from 1692 to the summer of 1699.

[3] "Corres. des Directeurs," i, 300.

[4] *Ibid.*, i, 415. "Srs. Openord et Tuby, qui pour n'estre pas dans l'Académie, ne profitent pas moins que les Pensionaires des avantages de ce séjour."

"un grand amas[1] de tout ce qui peut estre propre à orner les ouvrages d'architecture de tous les accompagnements qui peuvent les rendre solides, et agréables, car il dessine tout ce qu'il trouve de bon, tombeaux, tabernacles, fontaines, ornemens, chapelles, frontispices, etc." Unfortunately, La Teulière was not an architect, nor was Oppenord under his direct control, for in fact all the time Oppenord was diligently drawing the worst inventions of Borromini, and "les solides et agréables" were the very last qualities that he had in view. Many of these sketches were afterwards engraved by Huquier, and they rank among the worst and flimsiest examples of architectural sketch-books ever published. Villacerf, however, took a keen interest in his progress. Towards the end of 1692 he wrote to La Teulière, urging him to take special care of Oppenord: "Prenez garde sur tout qu'il ne se débauche et ne se marie point." La Teulière replied that he was an admirable youth who would go far, being a devoted student, "estant continuellement occupé chez lui, et hors de chez luy n'ayant commerce qu'avec le fils du Sr. Tubi (the sculptor)[2] avec qui il loge," or with the pensionaries, with whom he drew from the model every evening. The picture of the life at the French Academy at Rome is a pleasant one—Oppenord ("va toujours sa train") spending his days in drawing in and about Rome or in the School of the Academy, full of enthusiasm, desperately in earnest to qualify himself as an artist, Villacerf, his patron, anxious as to his progress, La Teulière, the director, not yet a social person and purveyor of the gossip of Rome for the *surintendant* in Paris, taking a keen paternal interest in the welfare of all his students. The Academy in Rome was still vital, still doing excellent work, still true to the tradition of its first great founder. In 1694 Oppenord was allowed special leave of six weeks to measure and draw the Palace of Caprarola.[3] La Teulière was very pleased with the result and wrote in 1695: "Ce jeune homme a du savoir pour sa profession, de l'application, de la sagesse, beaucoup de vivacité, de facilité à produire et de la fécondité même." But Oppenord was already becoming restless, and claimed that he ought to receive the same pension as the regular students. La Teulière pointed out to him that he was there for his own edification, but Villacerf ordered the payment of the

[1] "Corres. des Directeurs," i, 327.

[2] It appears from another letter from La Teulière that Oppenord lodged opposite the Academy with four other students, three Frenchmen and a German, "ou ils vivent tous, fort sagement et fort appliqués chascun à son éstude" (*ibid.*, i, 348).

[3] Designed by Vignola and then the property of the Duke of Parma.

regular pension of 150 livres to his protégé, and urged La Teulière to see that Oppenord applied himself seriously to the study of the figure,[1] which would be of great help to him if he thought of being an architect, and in order that on his return to France he might make drawings of all the sculpture in the gardens of Versailles. La Teulière was also to see that he wrote a good hand—most artists writing very badly.

In 1696 Oppenord received an offer of work in Florence, but on La Teulière's advice that "il y a très peu de chose à faire auprès des princes d'Italie," appears to have declined it. The School was at a low ebb in 1696. There were only four pensionaries, a sculptor (Le Pautre), Oppenord, and two painters. La Teulière was naturally unwilling to lose his most promising pupil,[2] and Villacerf, who hoped great things of Oppenord on his return to France, wished him to complete his training, and even seriously suggested that he might verify the measurements of Desgodetz' "édifices antiques des Rome." It would have been very much better for Oppenord if he had done so, but from the first he seems to have taken a line of his own. He selected for his study modern and almost contemporary work,[3] and it appears to have been his object to collect material with a view to dazzling the fashion in Paris with the latest thing in rococo ornament from Rome. In March 1698 he wrote to the *Surintendant* praying for leave to go to Venice. La Teulière worked out his tour for three months. He was to go to Loretto, Ferrara, and Ravenna, and return to Rome by Vicenza, Verona, Mantua, Parma, Bologna, and Florence. Villacerf not only agreed to continue his pension, but even undertook to pay his further expenses till he returned to Paris, and finally, in June 1698, Oppenord started for Venice, armed with letters of introduction, and generously provided with money. He wrote constantly to La Teulière, describing what he saw, and on his return to Rome at the end of October, La Teulière reported that he had made excellent use of his time.

In January 1699, Villacerf resigned the *Surintendance*, and was

[1] "Il ne faut pas qu'il se contente de la croquer sur ses plans, ni de la dessiner en petit comme font la plupart des dessinateurs" ("Corres. des Directeurs," ii, 153).

[2] He, however, skilfully managed his introduction to the Pope. See *ibid.*, ii, 385-6.

[3] La Teulière had weakly agreed, limiting modern work to "ouvrages faits depuis un siècle." He made measured drawings of the church of S. Ignatius which was actually not completed at the time, and had to take his dimensions of the dome from the model. The church of S. Ignatius was begun in 1650 from the designs of Alessandro Algardi. The next subject selected by Oppenord was the church of S. John Lateran.

succeeded by Mansart. La Teulière recommended Oppenord very strongly to Mansart, but was himself superseded in the Directorate by Houasse, under circumstances which I have already described. In July 1699, Oppenord was already on his way to Paris. For some seven years he had been the favourite pupil of the French Academy in Rome. La Teulière described him in 1698 as quick to learn, possessed of immense application, ready imagination, and facile draughtsmanship. "Il a une imagination des plus fécondes que j'ay veu, et une facilité d'execution qui surprend. Sans nulle complaisance, ce n'est pas un génie ordinaire."[1] He was ambitious, able, "d'un bon naturel," and not afflicted by any false modesty. La Teulière does not mention the fact, which is evident from his reports, that Oppenord had pursued his studies pretty well as he liked, and had paid little or no attention to the patient study of the antique, for which the French Academy in Rome was founded. He had also come to the conclusion that there was nothing to be gained by staying on in Rome. The Academy was in a precarious state. La Teulière, devoted and conscientious, was not a trained artist, and found himself in constant difficulties with his brilliant students. The State Treasury was nearly bankrupt, and Mansart connived at the appointment of Houassi, a second-rate painter, to succeed La Teulière, with explicit instructions to spend only "ce qui est absolument et indispensablement nécessaire."[2] As for the discipline and organization of the Academy, it was all to pieces, there was nothing further to be gained at the Academy, and Oppenord hurried back from Rome with great hopes from the new *Surintendant*, but he was doomed to disappointment. "A son retour Mansart qui ne s'interessait a personne qu'à lui même, ne parâit pas s'en être occupé."[3] Oppenord

[1] "Corres. des Directeurs," ii, 231.

[2] *Ibid.*, iii, 8, Mansart to Houasse, August, 1699. Houasse filled his letters to Mansart with requests for money and reports of the gossip of Rome. Poerson, who succeeded him in 1704, brought out with him a young Hardouin, a nephew of Mansart, and in November, 1705, this young man with a fellow-student got into serious trouble in the grounds of the Villa Borghese. Some Sbirri having arrested Hardouin, St. Paul, his companion, attacked the officers, killed one and wounded two more. The two young men were dragged off to prison, but Hardouin was released. St. Paul was condemned to imprisonment for life at Ancona, but after a great deal of negotiation the Pope finally agreed to his release after a nominal imprisonment in a fortress. In May, 1706, Poerson reported to Mansart, "Le Sr. Paul est enfin hors de prison, après bien de le peinne des soins et de l'argent." The discipline of the Academy had been relaxed since the days of Colbert who had expressly forbidden the wearing of swords by the students.

[3] A. de Montaiglon, "Corres. des Directeurs," iii. 11, note.

was not a relation, nor did he belong to the close ring of the Royal building staff, and it was not worth the *Surintendant's* while to do anything for him. I cannot find that Oppenord was employed on any important work till some twenty years after his return from Rome, and apparently all he found to do was the designing of an occasional high altar or monument.

In 1704 he designed the high altar of S. Germain des Prés, "un des plus riches et des plus elegans qu'on puisse voir,"[1] and typical of the high altar of the period; six columns of cipollino, set out on an elliptical plan, carried an entablature which, instead of continuing all round, stopped at the two front columns. Above this was an open baldachino formed by curved and foliated trusses, one over each column, which met at the top and supported a globe carrying a cross, and from the underside of the trusses was suspended a great angel surrounded by smaller ones. Below was the "Chasse" of S. Germain, supported by two kneeling angels in bronze gilt. In 1706 Oppenord designed a monument to Marie des Essarts in the church of S. Benoît, and in 1711 a tomb in bronze for the church of the Carmes Dechaussez. So far he seems to have had little success. He was not on the staff of the *Intendant des bâtiments*, Mansart had ignored him and De Cotte followed his example, and it was not till after the death of Louis XIV that Oppenord found any opportunity of showing what he could do. Philippe d'Orléans, the Regent, seems to have been determined to introduce a complete change, not only in the methods of government, but in the social life and setting of the Court of France. Everybody was tired to death of the pomp and ceremonial of the old King and Mme. de Maintenon. They quite wrongly identified it with the stately architecture of the time, and thus at length there was a chance for Oppenord and the "bambochades" and "colifichets" which he had so assiduously studied in Rome. He was employed by the Regent to design the entrance saloon to the great gallery at the Palais Royal designed by Mansart, and to decorate the entire suite of rooms. Piganiol de la Force was of opinion that no building had been decorated "avec plus d'art et avec plus de goût." The designs were engraved in Huquier's collection of designs by Oppenord, and Blondel says that the decorations were admirably treated, and that "le choix des ornemens et l'élégance des formes

[1] Piganiol de la Force, "Desc.," viii, 12. It was destroyed during the Revolution. The description in Piganiol is repeated almost verbatim from Germain Brice without acknowledgement.

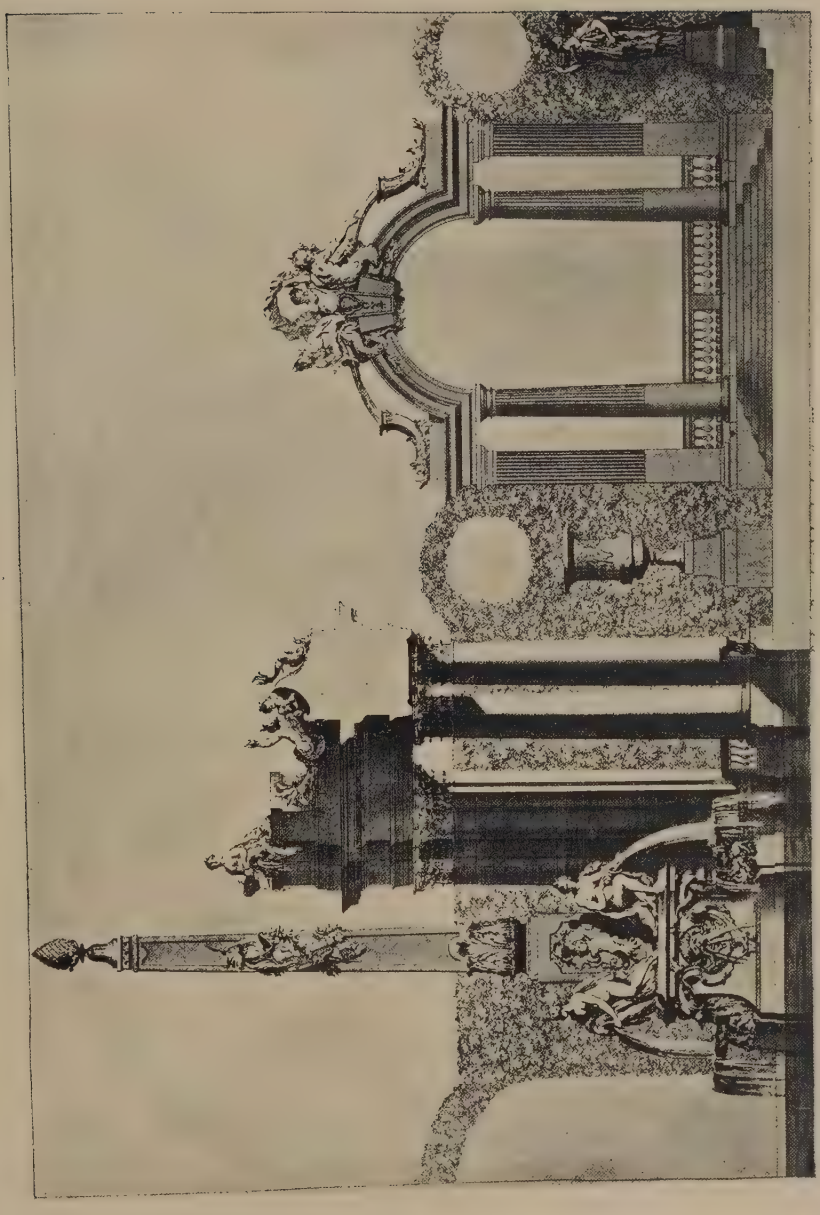
composent un tout capable d'inspirer une forte impression aux artistes que veulent se faire estimer dans leur profession."[1] He particularly commends the top lighting of the grand *salon d'entrée* for the purposes of a picture gallery.

In 1720 Oppenord carried out certain alterations at the Temple for the Regent, who was Grand Prior; in 1722 he redecorated the palace at Villers Cotterets, and about this time he was appointed "Directeur des Manufactures et Intendant des Jardins des Maisons Royales." According to Mariette[2] Oppenord designed the additions to the house of M. Crozat le Jeune at the end of the Rue Richelieu, and M. Crozat, who was a famous amateur, thought so highly of his abilities that he lodged him in his house—another example of the position of the tame architect in the eighteenth century, similar to that of Kent in the establishment of Lord Burlington. Oppenord seems to have fallen out of fashion after the death of the Regent in 1723, but he carried on his work at S. Sulpice. His first commission here had been the high altar in 1719; he was then entrusted with the work of continuing the church, and with the exception of the west façade and towers this was completed from his designs in 1736. By that date, however, the work had already been taken out of his hands, and the west front was begun from the designs of Servandoni in 1735. Oppenord's design for the interior of S. Sulpice is the only executed work by which it is now possible to form an opinion of his abilities as an architect. The impression given is not favourable. Oppenord may have been a master of "colifichets," but he had little sense of serious architecture, and even Blondel, his pupil, who pronounced him the greatest draughtsman of his time, had to admit that Oppenord's design for the crossing, especially the treatment of the centre bay, was one of the very worst in Paris. The belfry, which had been built from his design above the crossing, had to be taken down a few years after its erection on account of its excessive weight.

Oppenord died in 1742. He was "Écuyer, Directeur général des Bâtiments et jardins de son Altesse Royale Mons. le duc d'Orléans," but the patronage of the Duke had been his one support. Meissonnier

[1] "Arch. Franc.," iii, 42. De Montaiglon, "Corres. des Directeurs," iii, 11, says that Oppenord designed a gallery at the Palais Royal which collapsed, but the gallery appears to have been designed by Mansart.

[2] "Archives de l'art Franc.," iv, 51. But according to another account this house was designed for le President Crozat in 1704 by Jean Silvain Cartaud. The house has been destroyed. See "Nouv. Archives," i, 292.



DESIGNS FOR DECORATION OF THE PALAIS ROYAL. BY G. M. OPPENORD

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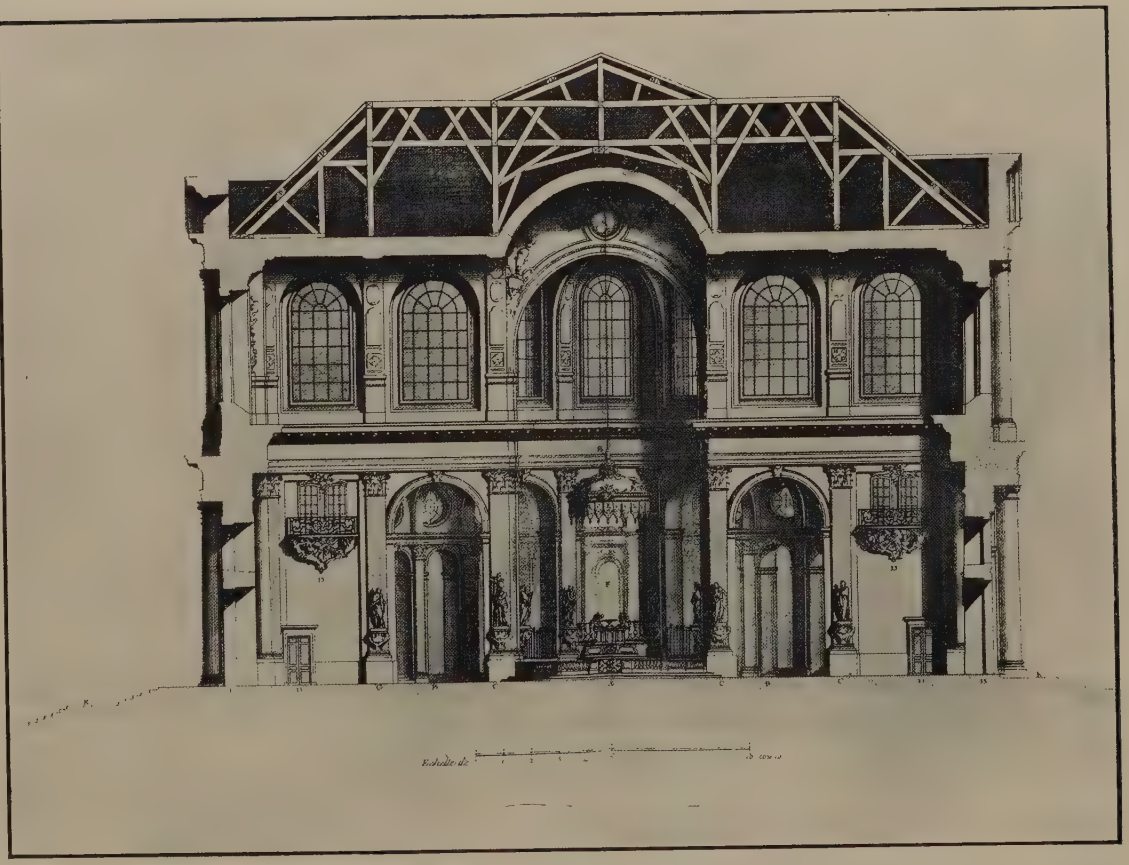
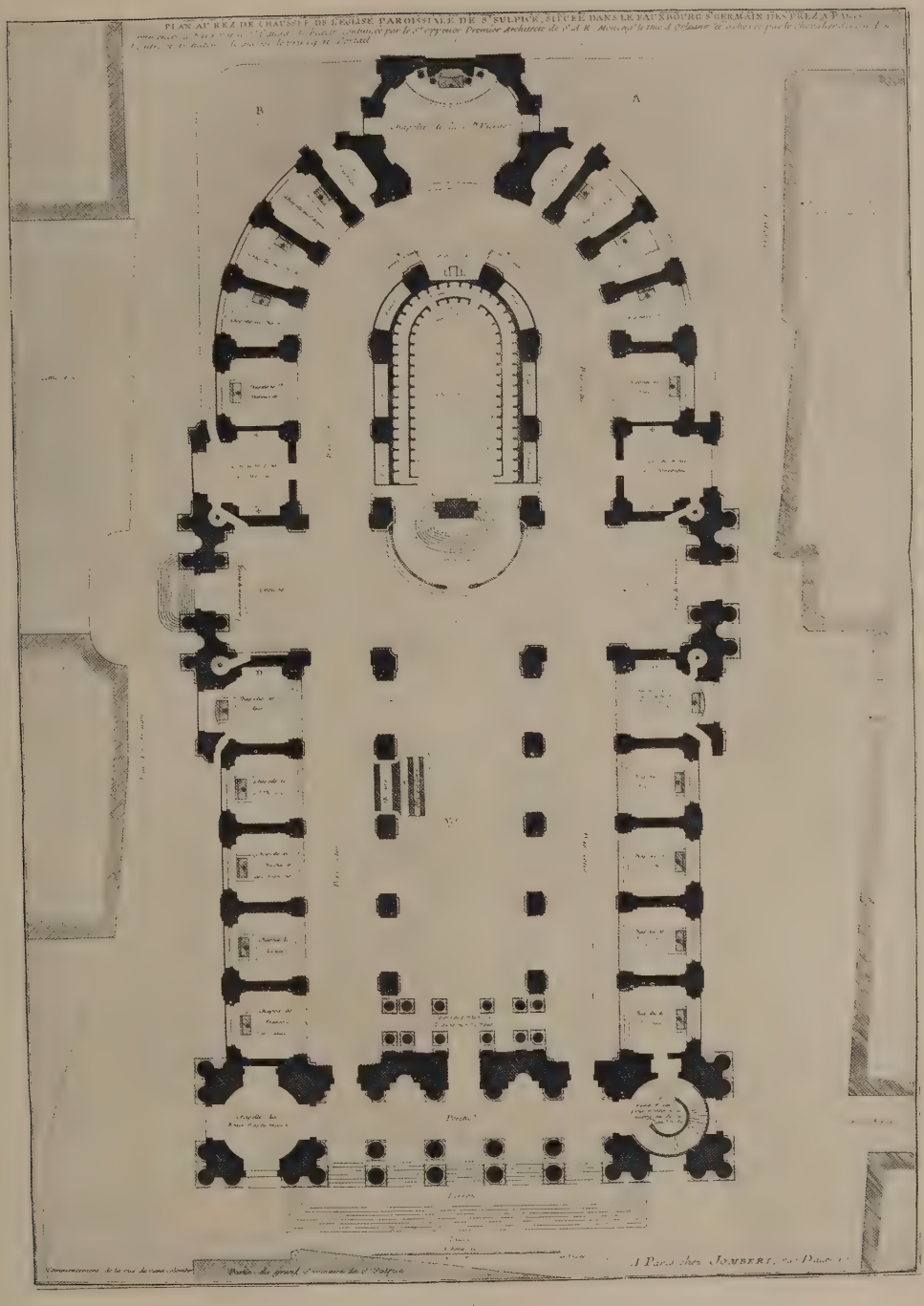


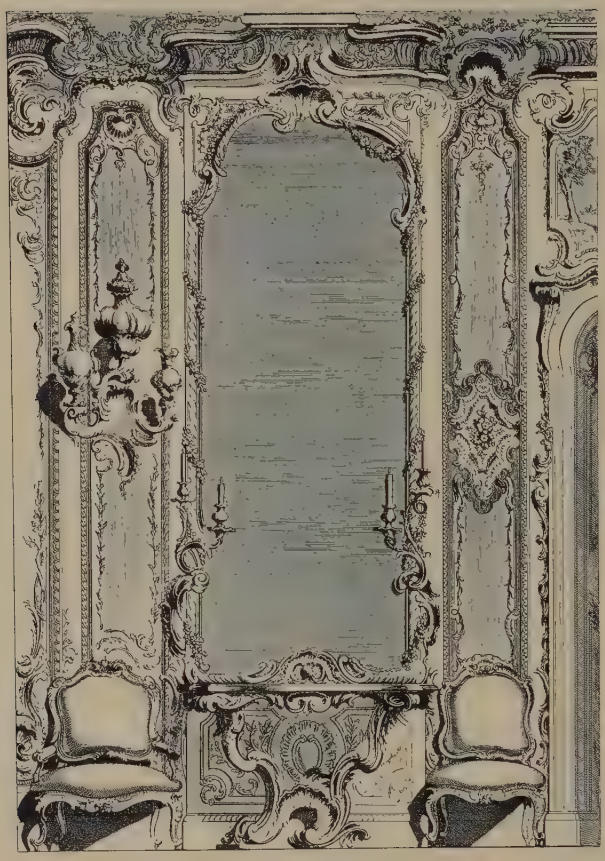
TRANSVERSE SECTION, S. SULPICE, PARIS. BY OPPENORD

(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," II)



PLAN OF S. SULPICE, PARIS. BY GITTARD, OPPENORD, AND SERVANDONI
(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," II)

[II. PP. 88, 89



DESIGN FOR SALON. BY J. A. MEISSONNIER

was already outstripping him in vulgarity, and he had not maintained the brilliant promise of his student years in Rome. His transcripts from Bernini and Borromini had won him a transient success, but though French society hankered for something new, and for anything gay and cheerful, the banalities of Borromini were not what they wanted. Oppenord did not possess the necessary lightness of touch to reconcile the Fashion to his exuberant ornament. Both by race and temperament he was unable to grasp the peculiar quality of the art of the old regime, its subtle and elusive grace, a certain fastidious delicacy amidst all its vice and folly. The prophecies of La Teulière that Oppenord had genius and would go far, were never fulfilled, and such reputation as remains to him is based on the volumes of his designs engraved and published by Huquier at Leyden after his death. These included designs for chandeliers, girandoles, fragments of architecture, tombs and fountains, borrowed from Bernini and spoilt in the process, decorations of rooms, obelisks, high altars, and all sorts of miscellaneous details badly designed and carelessly drawn, but among them are certain designs for the reconstruction of part of the Palais Royal, which are very well executed and attractive, with a certain cheerful frivolity. These designs show that Oppenord was an artist of some real ability, but he had no natural instinct[1] for architecture, or sense of style, not even the fantastic imagination of his favourite, Borromini. D'Argenville says that after his death, there was a reaction in his favour, and his drawings were in great demand. The preface to Huquier's edition (Leyden 1748) describes him as "Le Le Brun d'architecture"; others called him the French Borromini. He had some touch of the quality of both, but neither of these men was a first-rate artist, and Oppenord seems to have combined the worst qualities of both.

Juste Aurèle Meissonnier belonged to the same school as Oppenord, and was an even worse offender. He was born at Turin in 1693. Nothing seems to be known of his early training—indeed, it is doubtful if he ever received any. This, however, did not prevent his claiming competence in all the arts, describing himself in the title-page of his "Œuvre" as "Peintre, Sculpteur, Architecte," etc.—"dessinatur de la Chambre et Cabinet du Roy,"[2] and publishing a general parallel of

[1] Huquier also published a "Livre des Fragments d'Architecture" by Oppenord, a small octavo volume containing sketches from Bernini and Borromini and others, ill selected and badly drawn. It is just the sketch-book of a second-rate student without insight into the meaning and purpose of architecture.

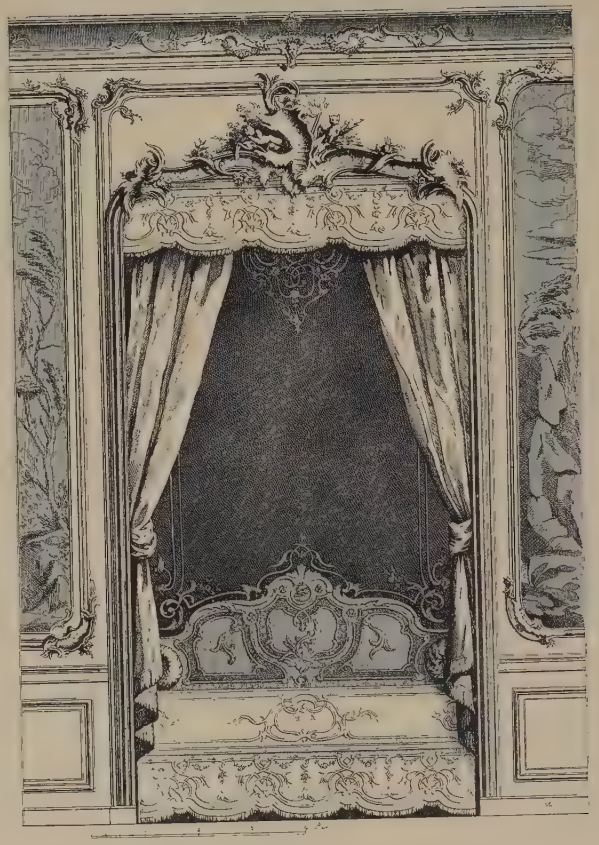
[2] See Destailleur, "Notices, etc." for a detailed list of Meissonnier's published works. See also Dussieux, "Les Artistes Français à l'étranger," p. 75.

important buildings drawn to one scale, beginning with an Egyptian obelisk and ending with his own design for a church for the Order of the Chevaliers du Saint Esprit. Meissonnier established himself in Paris as a jeweller and designer, but soon launched out into architecture, basing his manner on the worst extravagances of Borromini, and producing designs for architectural decorations which might have had some value in making the most of the sheen of metals, but which were simply deplorable when executed in building materials. Oppenord, though he had no sense of construction, was at least conscious of the elements of classical design. Meissonnier trampled on them at every point; no contortion of line was too violent for his purpose, and his schemes of decoration are like a nightmare. "Il tourna et fit bomber les corniches de toutes façons. Il les cintra en haut et en bas, en devant en arrière . . . il bannit la symmetrie, et il ne fit plus les deux côtés de panneaux semblables. Les balcons ni les rampes d'escalier n'eurent la permission de passer droit leur chemin, il leur fallut serpenter à sa volonté, et les matières, les plus raides devinrent souple sous sa main triomphante."[1] Meissonnier's methods were extremely successful for a time, but the French have a deep-seated instinct for what is vital in art—they have also a keen sense of humour, and the two together killed this ridiculous fashion of Oppenord and Meissonnier. When Meissonnier died at Paris in 1750 the reaction had already begun, and Cochin, the engraver, led the attack in the "Mercure de France" in the form of an ironical petition from a Society of Architects to the jewellers of Paris, praying them when they design a full-size artichoke on the cover of a pot, not to place beside it a hare the size of one's little finger, and, again, in making a candlestick, to make it upright to carry the light, and to recollect "qu'une bobêche doit être concave pour recevoir la cire qui coule, et non pas convexe." In a second letter in the "Mercure" for December 1752,[2] Cochin presented himself as replying for the admirers of Meissonnier. The famous Oppenord, he says, served us at first with abundance of zeal, but he could not forget that he had once studied architecture. The great Meissonnier gave us something far more valuable. It is true he had studied in Italy, but he wisely preferred the taste of Borromini to the "goût ennuyeux" for the antique, and thus he had rendered to France the same service as Borromini had

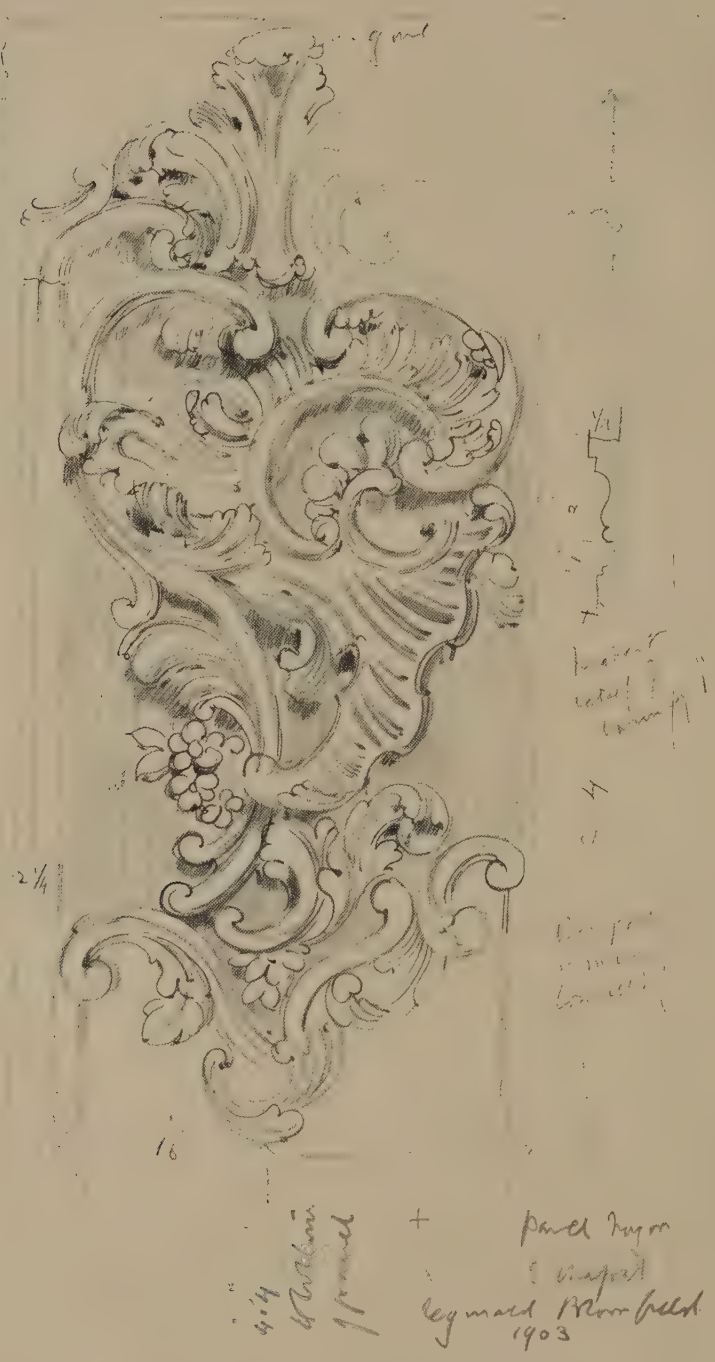
[1] Nicholas Cochin in a letter to the "Mercure de France," December, 1754, quoted by Destailleur.

[2] Quoted at length in M. Destailleur's "Notices sur quelques artistes Français," pp. 222-226.

DESIGNS FOR PANELS. BY F. DE CUVILLIÉS



DESIGN FOR BEDROOM. BY F. DE CUVILLIÉS (see pp. 91, 92)



WOOD PANEL. NOYON CATHEDRAL (see p. 92)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

rendered to Italy: that of introducing "une architecture gaie et indépendante de toutes les règles de ce qu'on l'on appelait anciennement le bon goût." His whole formula of design was based, adds Cochin, on the contour of the letter S. Cochin's irony was effective, summing up, as it did, the instinctive reaction of the best men in France against all this rubbish, and the fashion for the collop and the cockle-shell disappeared.

Meissonnier was, in fact, a jeweller, and Sebastian Slodtz, who succeeded him as "dessinateur du Cabinet du Roi," was a sculptor, and their aberrations are so far intelligible. It is sad to have to admit that in the first half of the eighteenth century architects themselves fell into line with the fashion, De Cotte at the Hôtel de Toulouse, Boffrand at the Hôtel de Soubise, and it was a pupil of De Cotte, François de Cuviliés, who introduced it into Germany, where, of course, it rapidly degenerated, and in the heavy hands of the Germans lost what little charm it had ever possessed. Dussieux, writing of the gardens of Weissenstein and Gerbach, says: "Les façades, l'ornementation intérieure, les jardins, les charmilles, les pièces d'eau, tout est français avec un peu de Borromini, pour donner à l'ensemble le mauvais goût nécessaire à une œuvre allemande de ce temps."[1]

De Cuviliés was born at Soissons in 1698, and entered the office of Robert de Cotte in Paris in 1714, about the time that the latter was engaged on the gallery of the Hôtel de Toulouse and the palace of Jacques Clement, Elector of Cologne. As I have already pointed out, it was the practice of De Cotte to prepare his designs in Paris and to send assistants from his office to superintend their execution abroad. These men often settled permanently in the country, and Cuviliés, who had been sent out in this capacity about 1721 to 1724, finally entered the service of the Elector of Cologne. In 1738 he was appointed "gentilhomme de bouche et premier architecte" of the Elector of Bavaria, and when the Elector became Emperor in 1745 Cuviliés took the title of Counsellor and Architect to his Imperial Majesty,[2] and became finally Director of the Crown Buildings. He died suddenly in 1768, leaving a son, François, who was appointed architect to the Court and Captain of Engineers, and who in 1773 engraved and published

[1] "Les Artistes Français à l'Étranger," 1876, p. 115.

[2] Destailleur, "Notices," p. 256. See also pp. 238-67 for a bibliography of works published by the Cuviliés. See also an article in the "Révue Universelle des Arts," Paris, 1859, by M. Berard. Cuviliés, *père*, was helped by an architect and engraver, Charles Albert de Lespiliés.

the works of his father and himself. These included designs for cartouches, panels, ceilings, "morceaux de fantaisie," "morceaux de caprices," ironwork, fountains, theatres, monuments, decorations of all sorts, and a series of plates for an "école d'architecture Bavaroise." Dussieux mentions among the works of the elder Cuviliés the garden and grottoes of the palace at Munich, the Aquarium and Opera (1744-56), l'Amalienbourg at Nymphenbourg, and work at Schleissheim for the Cardinal Duke of Bavaria. His reputation now rests on his design for decorations. Cuviliés appears to have been a better artist than Meissonnier or Oppenord. He was still capable on occasion of using a straight line, though he usually ended it up with a twirligig. But he lacked imagination, and he did not redeem his lack of it by the scholarship that gives a real value to the work of La Londe and Forty a generation later. Some of his panels show an obvious recollection of Bérain, and though they are not ungraceful, they have lost the irrepressible vivacity of the original. They abound in ragged fragments of shell, meaningless twirls and draperies, mere tricks of decoration without meaning or relevance, giving the impression of a *parti pris* and of complete boredom with the whole business, an impression which it is sometimes hard to escape in French architecture and decoration in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The fashion introduced by these men has had disastrous results on decorative art. It began with Borromini, a clever man, but an architectural anarchist of the deepest dye. The Bibiena family carried it to Vienna, De Cotte's emissaries to Spain, Oppenord and Meissonnier to France, and Cuviliés back again to Germany. It thus overran civilized Europe with the exception of this country, which owed its escape to its strong common sense, and also in some degree, it is only fair to say, to the resolute stand on the teaching of Palladio made by Lord Burlington and his following, but everywhere it has filtered down to the lowest forms of commercial decoration. The huge and hideous mirror of the boarding house, the squalid cornice and the contorted console of trade architecture of the last generation are its legacies to this day. It is difficult to place oneself in the frame of mind of those persons who got any real enjoyment out of the rococo manner in its latter days. Bérain with his quaint and capricious fancies, is intelligible enough. They made no serious demand on the imagination. On the other hand, they were always interesting and pleasant to live with, and Bérain had an irresistible feeling for pattern that gives a certain distinction to the most fantastic of his designs. It is not the fact that the decoration of

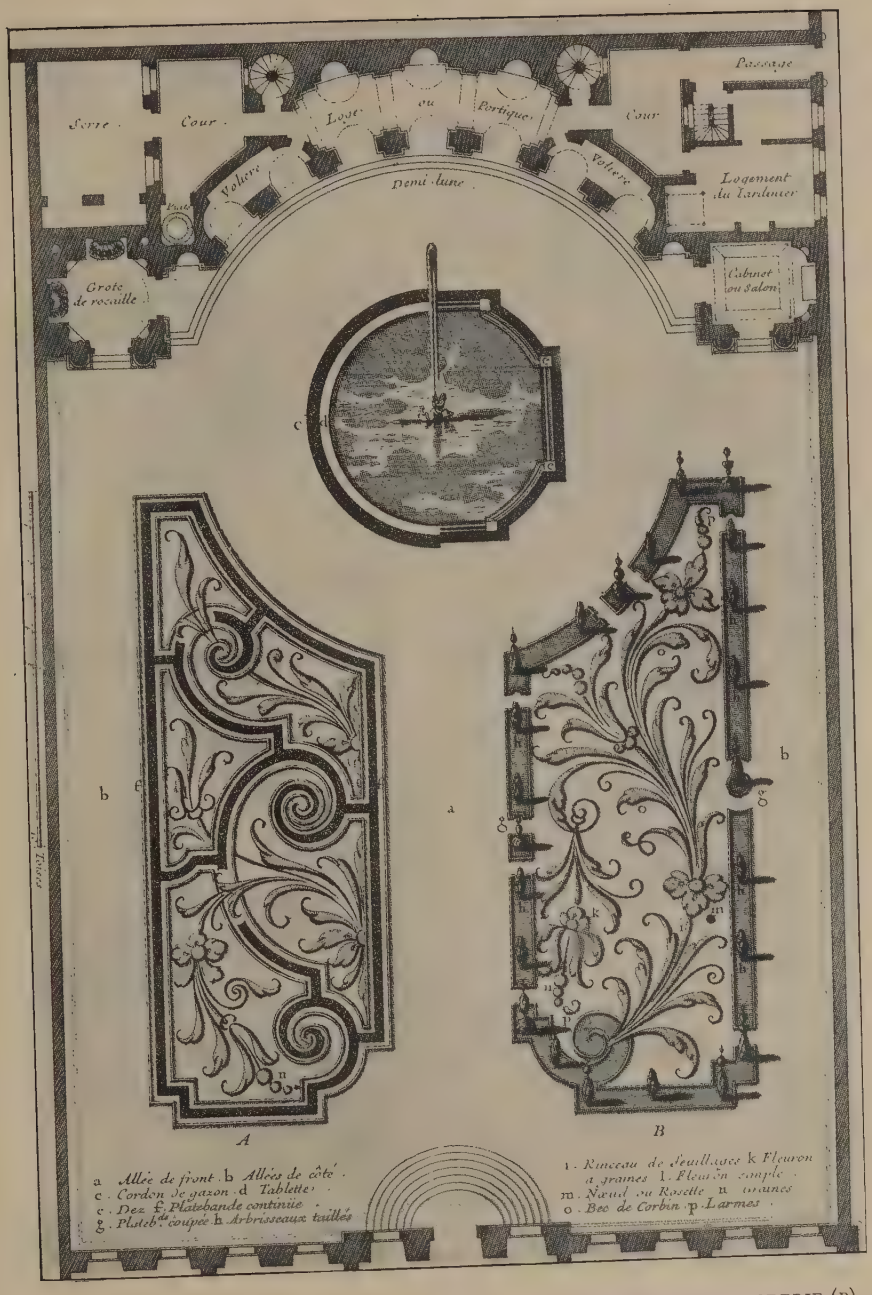
the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV was dull and heavy, the "singeries" and "chinoiseries" were cheerful and often very amusing. How then was it that these were superseded by the dull and forced inventions of Oppenord and Meissonnier? I can only attribute it to the slackening of control all round after the death of Louis XIV. It had already been weakened by the license of J. H. Mansart, for that eminent architect, the Director and Patron of the Academy, violated its teaching at nearly every point in his design, and his immediate followers were neither great architects nor great men. De Cotte, who succeeded him both as Premier Architect and Director of the Academy, was not a strong man. Amiable and accomplished as he seems to have been, he was brought up in an atmosphere of intrigue and servility, and the Mansart tradition of personal success at all cost was too much for him. Instead of resisting this monstrous invasion he went with the tide, and even attempted it himself, though in a less offensive form, in the Gallery of the Hôtel de Toulouse. Boffrand did the same at the Hôtel de Soubise. In both cases it is difficult to say what was the actual part taken by these architects, whether they actually designed the decorations in detail, or whether they merely gave a general supervision to the schemes supplied by enterprising decorators. In either case, it is clear that they fell in with the fashion readily enough. Had these leading architects stood out against the craze, or guided it into saner lines, they would not have betrayed their art into the hands of such artistic impostors and adventurers as Just Aurèle Meissonnier. It was reserved for a greater artist and a stronger man than either Boffrand or De Cotte to rescue French art from this ignominious servitude.

CHAPTER XXIII

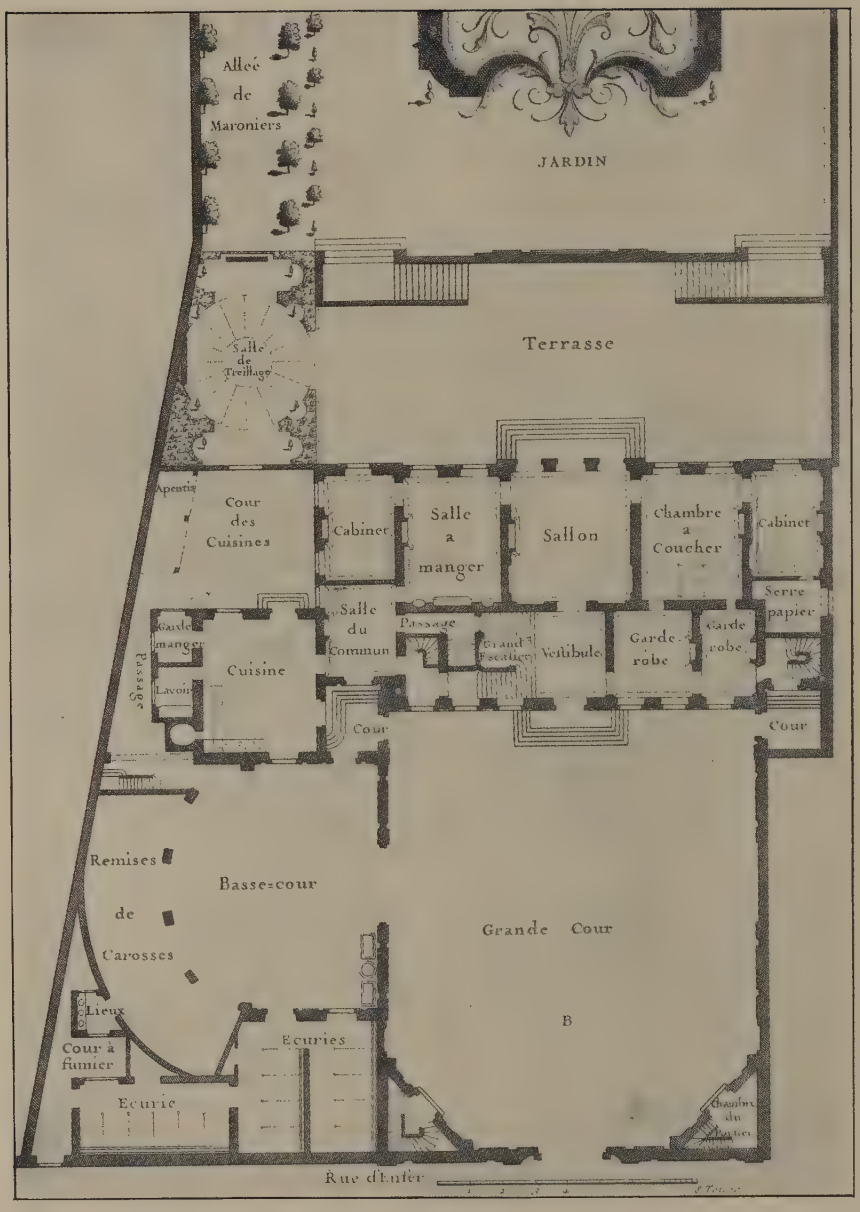
Le Blond, Boffrand

ONE is glad to return to the study of architecture after this excursion among the follies of the decorator and upholsterer. In domestic buildings architecture and decoration are, of course, intimately connected; but in the two generations that preceded the rise of Ange Jacques Gabriel architecture was subordinated to decoration—the cart was placed before the horse—with the natural result that architecture came to a standstill. Its quality was negative, except when handled by robust and vigorous artists, such as the elder Gabriel—a Frenchman steeped in the French tradition, and indifferent to the "art nouveau" of the practitioners of his time. On the other hand, though architecture remained stationary, French painting and sculpture came into their own early in the eighteenth century. Watteau's delightful art revealed a world of its own that no other artist had yet explored; and the supremacy of French sculpture was established beyond any possible question. The ideal that Colbert had aimed at was realized. French art was recognized as supreme throughout Europe. Its incomparable craftsmanship and the vast material resources at its disposal had finally disposed of the claims of Italian art—at the end of the seventeenth century a shabby version of a once magnificent tradition; and whereas, in the sixteenth century, all the kings and princes who could afford it tried to outbid each other in securing the services of Italian artists, in the eighteenth century it was France who sent out her artists and craftsmen to Russia, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Spain. They even smuggled themselves over to England.[1] Patte, writing in 1765, was able to say with justice, "Paris est à

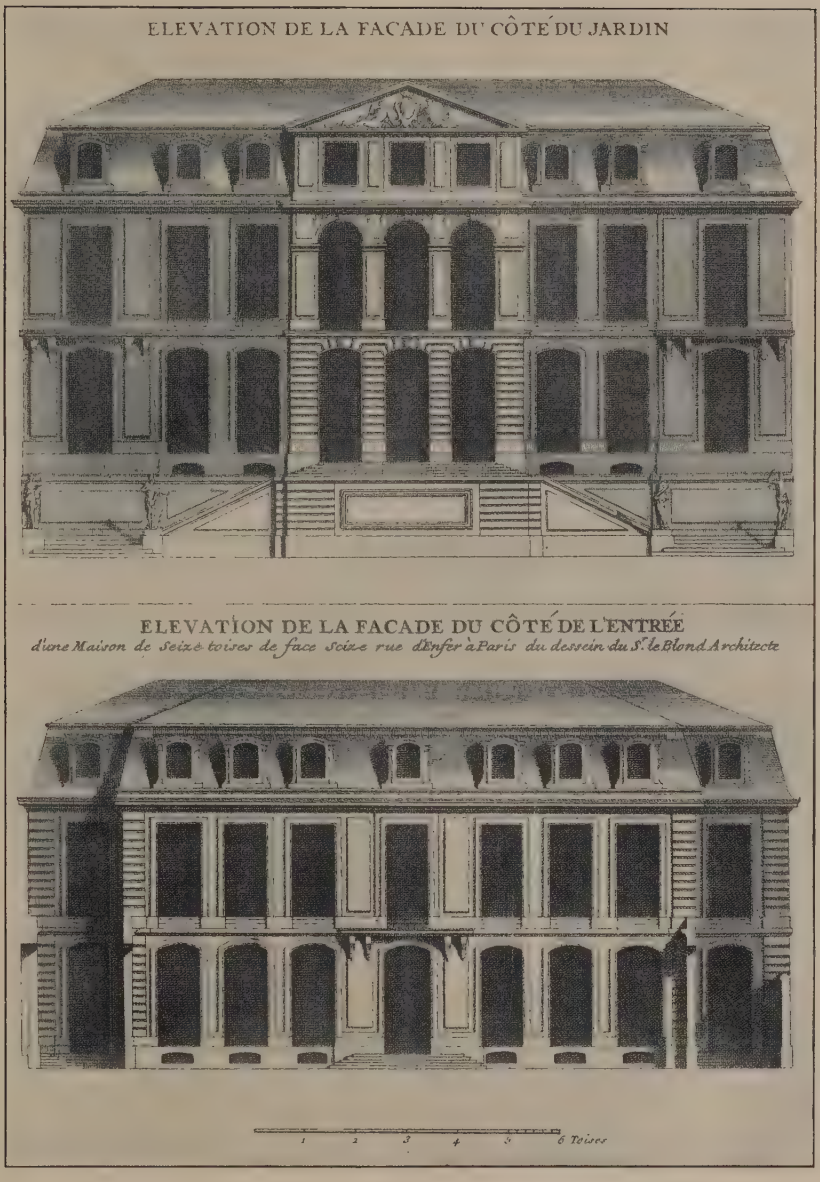
[1] No member of any of the Academies was allowed to leave the kingdom without the formal permit of the Directeur-Général des Bâtiments. See "Nouv. Archives," 1878, pp. 1-155, for a list of *congés*, 1693-1792, and correspondence of artists working abroad with the Director-General. About the middle of the eighteenth century some craftsmen got over to England for the tapestry works at Fulham and Exeter, but as soon as this reached the ears of the Director stringent orders were issued to stop any further emigration. French supremacy in the crafts was built up by a rigid system of protection.



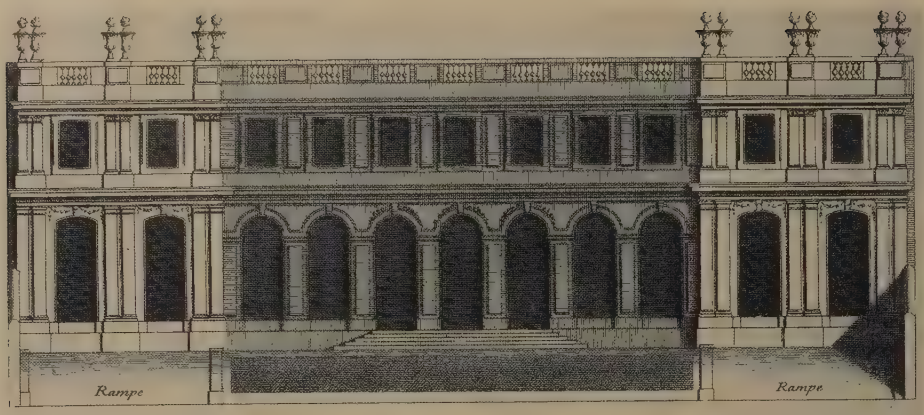
PLAN OF GARDEN-HOUSE, PARTERRE À L'ANGLAISE (A), AND PARTERRE DE BRODERIE (B) BY J. B. A. LE BLOND (see p. 95)
(FROM DAVILER, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE")



GROUND PLAN OF HOUSE, RUE D'ENFER, PARIS. BY LE BLOND (see p. 95)
(FROM DAVILER, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE")

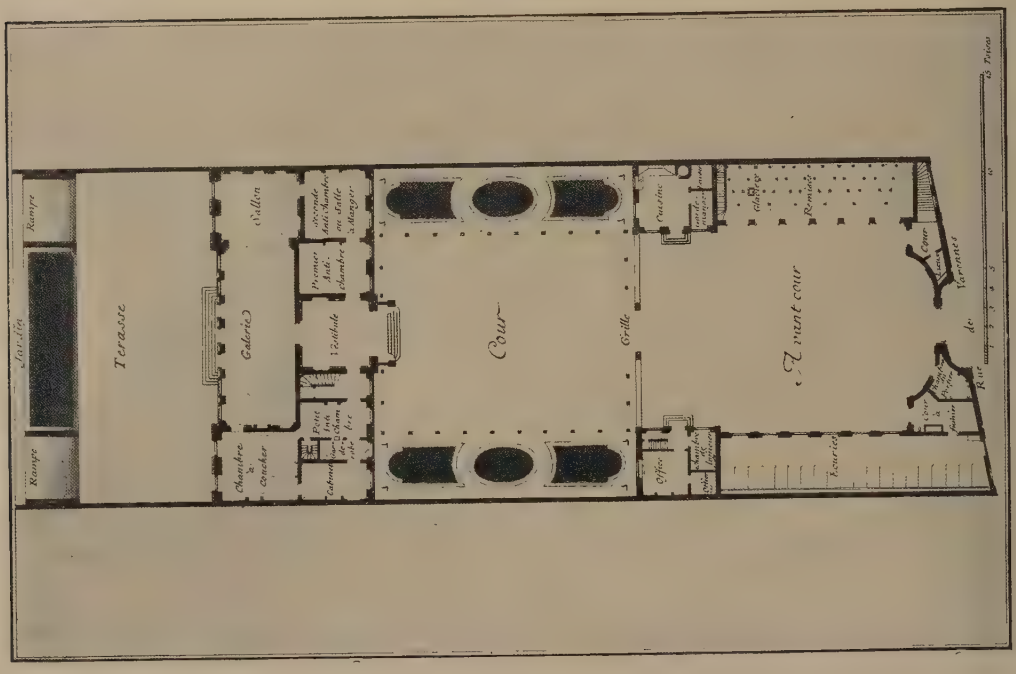

ELEVATION DE LA FACADE DU CÔTÉ DU JARDIN
ELEVATION DE LA FACADE DU CÔTÉ DE L'ENTRÉE
d'une Maison de Seize toises de face Seize rue d'Enfer à Paris du dessein du S.r le Blond Architecte
1 2 3 4 5 6 Toises

ELEVATIONS OF HOUSE, BY LE BLOND, RUE D'ENFER, PARIS (see p. 95)
(FROM DAVILER, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE")



Elévation du côté de l'entrée

ELEVATIONS



GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL DE CLERMONT. BY LE BLOND (see p. 96)

l'Europe ce qu'étoit la Grèce, lorsque les arts y triomphoient; il fournit des artistes à tout le reste du monde."[1]

The career of Jean Baptiste Alexandre Le Blond was typical of these men. Le Blond, who was born in Paris in 1679, was the son of a painter—"Assez médiocre" is Mariette's description—who in 1683 published a treatise on the five orders. Both in his father's studio and at the print-shop of one of his uncles, young Le Blond studied the engravings of Jean Le Pautre, and, inspired by these, determined to become a designer himself. He was apprenticed to a cabinet maker named Feuillet, who knew more about architecture and perspective, "que ne comportoit son état," and the pupil, having natural taste and unusual skill in draughtsmanship, very soon improved on his master, and produced drawings in line and wash of Chinese ink, which Mariette described as "d'une intelligence merveilleuse, et faits avec la plus grande précision." He mentions particularly a drawing of the tomb of the Valois at S. Denis, and certain designs for parterres which Le Blond made for Mariette's father,[2] which won the rare approbation of Le Nôtre, "or l'on scait combien il étoit peu accoutumé à en donner, surtout quand il s'agissoit de jardinage." As Le Nôtre died in 1700, Le Blond must have been barely twenty when he made these designs, which show an unusually matured taste for so young a man. Dussieux says that Le Blond was a pupil of Girard, architect to the Regent, but apparently he owed his introduction to the public to Mariette, the publisher, for he does not seem to have entered the Academy School, nor was he in the Royal employment. According to D'Argenville, who claims the introduction for his father, the Chartreux were contemplating a new Hôtel in the Rue d'Enfer, and the Prior Dom Morin showed the designs of different architects to D'Argenville the elder. The latter remarked that Le Blond was not among them, and arranged an interview between the Prior and the young architect. At this interview, "cet habile homme fit en sa présence un dessin plus beau que tous les autres, et sur quelques objections qui lui furent proposées, il en dessina plusieurs plans." Dom Morin was so pleased that he gave him the work then and there.[3] Le Blond's conduct was quite unprofessional

[1] "Monuments érigés à la gloire de Louis XV," p. 6.

[2] The well-known printseller and publisher. In Lord Binning's collection I have seen a set of fourteen small folio plates, engraved by Mariette from designs of Le Blond, which include architectural as well as garden designs. These I take to be the plates referred to.

[3] D'Argenville, "Vies des fameux Architectes," i, 442.

but his design which he engraved in the 1710 edition of Daviler[1] as an illustration of a considerable house, was an able one, both in plan and elevation. He also gives plans and elevations of a house *à l'Italienne*, which he describes as "projetté" for a "grande place" near the Chartreux in Paris. Neither this nor a still larger design intended for a site near the Invalides appear to have been carried out. In the latter, he provided on the garden side a grand salon "à l'Italienne," shown in the section running the full height of the two storeys, with a double-coved cornice. It was perhaps in consequence of these designs that Le Blond was employed to design the palace of the Archbishop of Auch and of the Archbishop of Narbonne at Canette, near that town. In 1708 the Hôtel de Clermont, in the Rue de Varenne was begun from his designs, a house of some importance, set well back from the street beyond an "avant cour." The house, a long, low, two-storey building, was not very happily treated. Le Blond used for the first floor the attic storey, so popular at the time, but it looks forlorn and out of place in a two-storey building, and the mansard roofs with lucarnes, above a single storey in the "avant cour," are more satisfactory. The plan is chiefly remarkable for its fine gallery and salon, giving a total length of some 80 feet, and for the extreme inconvenience of placing the *salle-à-manger* on one side of the Court and the kitchen on the other.[2] Blondel speaks in high terms of this house. As first built, it was, he says, "une des plus riantes du faubourg S. Germain, par la disposition générale de ses bâtimens, leur distribution et leur ordonnance, parties aussi difficiles qu'essentielles à observer dans la compositions d'un plan, et que Le Blond possédoit à un dégré superieur."

Le Blond was undoubtedly skilful in the design of general outlay, that is, comprehensive schemes including the house, its grounds and approaches. Mariette says he had made this his principal study, and that he was more successful with gardens than with buildings, being, in regard to the latter, "plus profonde en théorie que dans la pratique," though, he adds, he might have been equally successful with his buildings had it not been for the extreme disorder of his life. Whether it was in consequence of this that Le Blond lost his practice is not known, but about this time he had leisure for two considerable works, the famous "Theory and Practice of Gardening," written by Dezallier D'Argenville the elder, under Le Blond's instructions and supervision,

[1] Daviler, "Cours," i. 185. The house was occupied by the Duc de Chaulnes, and later was enlarged by Courtonne. D'Argenville, "Voyage Pittoresque," p. 349.

[2] The building was destroyed in 1838.

and entirely illustrated by Le Blond. This appeared in 1709; followed in 1710 by a revised edition of Daviler's "Cours d'Architecture." "La Théorie et la pratique du jardinage" remains to this day the standard authority on the formal garden. It was issued anonymously—for what reason is not known—and had an extraordinary success. An English translation by John James, the architect of Greenwich, with engravings by Van der Gucht, appeared in 1712;[1] a second French edition in 1713; a third edition in 1722—in which for the first time the name of Le Blond appeared as author; and a fourth edition in 1748, in which the author is described as "M . . . de l'Académie Royale des sciences de Montpellier." "M . . ." was Dezallier D'Argenville the elder, who in this edition claimed the authorship of the book, but Mariette[2] says specifically of Le Blond, "C'est lui qui non seulement a donné tous les desseins mais qui même a fait le canevas du livre, qui a été rempli sous ses yeux par M. Dezallier D'Argenville." The book is a most useful practical treatise on the manner of Le Nôtre, clearly arranged, well illustrated, and free from the claptrap and false sentiment that nowadays make the subject ridiculous. The designs are in most cases too elaborate and too artificial, but that was almost inevitable in the attempt to reduce to a system a manner of design which—in the hands of its creator—had been vital and fluid. The "Cours d'Architecture" has been already referred to. Le Blond took it in hand for two reasons, first because, as usual, Daviler's work had been pirated in Holland, and secondly, because Daviler's early death had prevented his work being brought up to date, and the manner of design had altered since the book was written. The 1710 edition is thus of great value, inasmuch as it gives Le Blond on Daviler; Le Blond, one of the ablest of the younger generation in the early part of the eighteenth century, on Daviler the most competent exponent of the doctrine of Colbert's Academy. Le Blond accordingly gives in detail "La nouvelle manière de distribuer les plans," as against the one given by Daviler, and the examples that he gives are his own designs, some of which he says had already been executed. Le Blond's designs show an advance on Daviler in planning, and it is clear that this advance, which French writers are apt to identify with De Cotte and the elder L'Assurance, and the Regent's work at the Palais Royal, was a recognized practice among the younger men from ten to twenty years earlier. Le Blond's

[1] Three English editions were issued—the last in 1743.

[2] Abecedario, Le Blond. "Arch. de l'Art Fran.," vi, 92.

illustrations and notes to Daviler were, in fact, the first public declaration of the new departure.

The two books together seem to have brought Le Blond to the front again. D'Argenville the younger says that he designed a house at Châtillon which was "one of the ornaments of the environs of Paris." About 1715, a representative of Peter the Great, François le Fort, came to Paris to collect artists of all sorts for work at Moscow. He selected as architect Le Blond, offering him 20,000 livres as salary; and, in spite of the protests of amateurs, at the loss to France of "aussi beau génie."[1] Le Blond started for Russia in 1716 with his wife and family, his two draughtsmen, and a small company of artists and craftsmen, including sculptors, masons, joiners, carpenters, smiths and founders, jewellers, and tapestry weavers.[2] He was received by the Czar with great favour and at once employed to design the palace and gardens of the Peterhof. The Czar was so impressed with his ability that he appointed him "premier architecte," with the result that certain Italian architects already in the Czar's service at Moscow, caballed against him and bribed the workmen to make mistakes in his buildings. D'Argenville says that one of the Italians even attempted to assassinate him in a wood. They succeeded in making his life miserable, and after three years his health broke down, and he died of small-pox in 1719 at the early age of forty. The Czar gave him a magnificent funeral by way of amends. Le Blond seems to have had some touch of genius. "Il avoit un goût delicate, sa manière étoit pure, il possédoit l'heureux talent de produire aisement, et avec une intelligence infinie." It was unfortunate for France that, owing to bad government and the impenetrable monopoly of the official clique, some of the best of her artists were unable to find any adequate career and had to leave the country. Daniel Marot, one of the most brilliant designers of his time, had to take refuge in Holland. Daviler was driven from Paris by the jealous egotism of Mansart; and Le Blond, disorderly of life it may be, but a sincere and accomplished artist, found it necessary to leave his country and go out into the wilderness to die—for to a Parisian of that time Russia and Moscow could have seemed little else.

Germain Boffrand, on the other hand, a man of greater reputation and much less ability, was conspicuously successful; but then he

[1] D'Argenville, "Vies," p. 445.

[2] See Dussieux, "Les Artistes Français à l'Etranger," pp. 121 and 543. Dussieux says that he designed the Peterhof and its gardens, which he describes as an imitation of Versailles, with abundance of water and gilt lead statues.

managed to establish himself within the inner circle of officialdom. Boffrand was the son of a sculptor, and his mother was a sister of Quinault. He was born at Nantes in 1667, but came to Paris at the age of fourteen, and was sent by his uncle to the School of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, and actually worked three years in the studio of Girardon, the sculptor. His interest, however, lay in architecture, and he was introduced to J. H. Mansart, who advised him to visit S. Germain-en-Laye, then being altered from Mansart's designs. D'Argenville[1] says that young Boffrand made a perspective drawing of the château, which so pleased Mansart that he at once invited him to enter his office at Versailles, that here he was employed on drawings for the Orangery and on those of the Place Vendôme, being finally placed in charge of the first buildings erected there, and that Mansart rewarded him with the appointment of Keeper of the "Bureau des dessins des bâtiments du Roi," at a salary of 2,500 livres per annum. This account, given by D'Argenville, is only partly confirmed by the "Comptes." The first entry occurs in 1687, when he was paid 740 francs, at the rate of 60 francs a month, for work done as a draughtsman on the "plants et profils des bastimens de la place Vendôme et du Commun des Capucines."[2] He was employed on drawings for the Place Vendôme till 1691. In 1693 he received 500 francs for plans of the Palace and Gardens of Fontainebleau and Choisy, and small sums for surveys of other Royal houses in 1694-6. In 1698 he seems to have been in receipt of a regular salary, but his position was quite a subordinate one, and his employment intermittent, as after 1699 he disappears for ten years from the "Comptes," emerging again in 1709 and succeeding years as the "Sr. de Beaufrant, architect" at a salary of 1,000 francs per annum. There are no other references to him in the "Comptes," and Mansart's patronage must have been less benevolent than D'Argenville supposed. D'Argenville continues: "Né d'un caractère enjoué et bouffon, la comédie fut un des amusements de sa jeunesse," and he even composed some plays that were printed and acted. Like Vanbrugh—though with little of his ability—Boffrand probably introduced himself to fashionable Society by his indifferent plays. In 1709 he was elected to the Academy of Architecture, and soon afterwards was entrusted by Anne of Bavaria, Princesse de Condé,[3] with some extensive additions and alterations to

[1] "Vies," pp. 419-34.

[2] "Comptes," ii, 1272. See years 1688-1691.

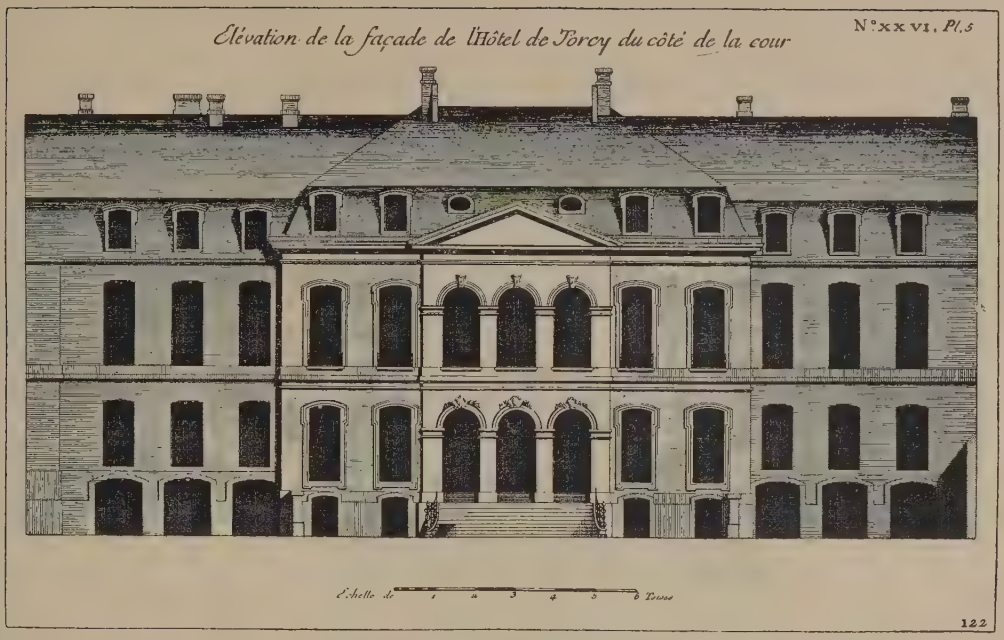
[3] Wife of Henri Jules de Bourbon (d. 1709), son of le grand Condé. J. H. Mansart

the Palais du Petit Bourbon, and this was followed by a large hotel—the Hôtel de Torcy, and the Hôtel de Seignelay, in the Rue de Bourbon (Faubourg S. Germain). The Hôtel de Torcy (now 74 Rue de Lille) was begun in 1714. It is badly planned, and a dull design altogether. The kitchens are placed next the street, and separated by an open court from the house, so that everything had to be taken across an open court, up a very narrow and ill-lit staircase, through a garderobe, past the grand stairs and across the main vestibule towards the *salle-à-manger*, which was placed to the left of the entrance vestibule. Boffrand may have been a delightful person, but as a house-planner he was grotesque, and evidently unacquainted with the later developments of domestic architecture. The principal rooms are all arranged *en suite* on the garden front—as had been the practice twenty years before. The grand staircase is badly managed, and the elevations are more suggestive of a barrack or a hospital than a private house; they are plain, it is true, but it is the plainness of a poor invention, and not the simplicity of a distinguished mind. The Hôtel de Seignelay (76 Rue de Lille)—a smaller house—was built two years later. The plan is not quite so inconvenient, but its elevations are equally dull. Blondel, who had a great personal regard for Boffrand, commends these elevations as an example of excellent simplicity. "Cette façade n'a ni ordres d'architecture ni corps de refend (rustications) et ne doit sa beauté qu'à l'élégance et à la proportion des parties qui la composent, genre d'architecture trop peu estimé aujourdhui."[1] The sentiment is admirable—it is only its application to these examples that it open to question: but Blondel persevered in his loyalty, and was able to find in the elevations of the Hôtel de Torcy "un air de grandeur que M. Boffrand a toujours sçu répandré dans toutes ses productions," as opposed to the efforts of "les hommes superficiels," who hope to disguise their incapacity behind a profusion of licentious details. As a matter of fact, the elevations of both hotels contain several deplorable solecisms in design.

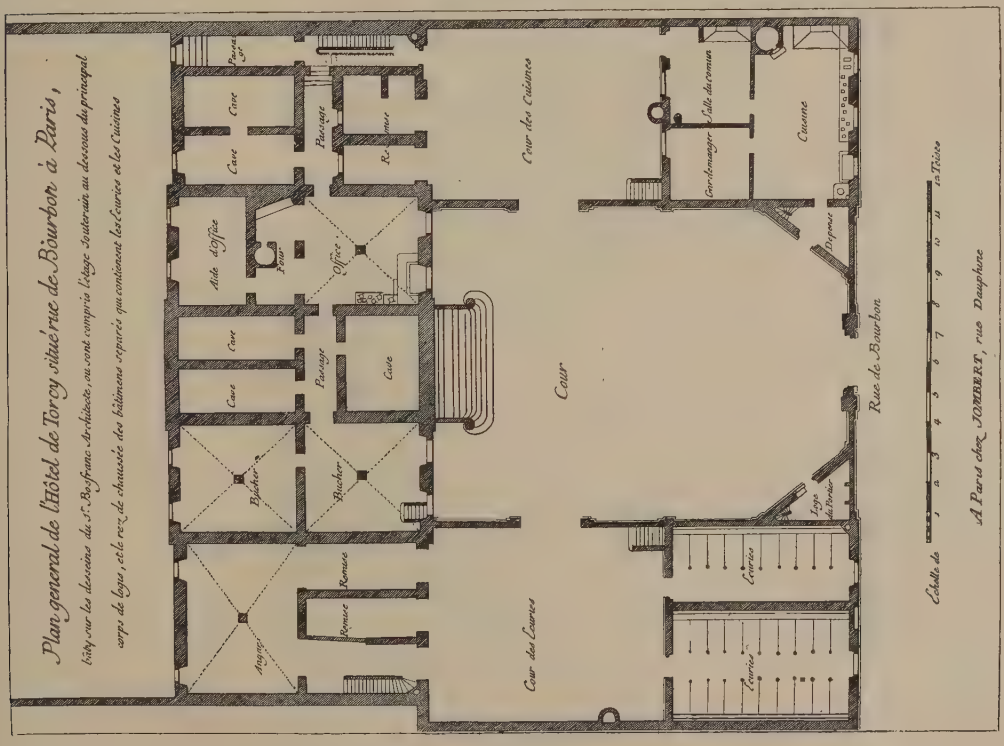
The Hôtel Amelot, now No. 1 Rue S. Dominique, is more interesting. In the plan, at any rate, Boffrand launched out into an original, if somewhat unpractical treatment. By a free use of subor-

had carried out work at Chantilly for Henri Jules de Bourbon, and it is noticeable that his widow entrusted this work not to De Cotte, Mansart's successor, but to Boffrand.

[1] Of the Hôtel de Seignelay Blondel says: "Les proportions, les formes, et la simétrie qui y sont exactement observés, tiennent bien d'une richesse qui souvent ailleurs ne sert qu'égarer des vrais principes de la bonne architecture" ("Arch. Fran.," i, 283).



[Blondel, "Arch. Franc."

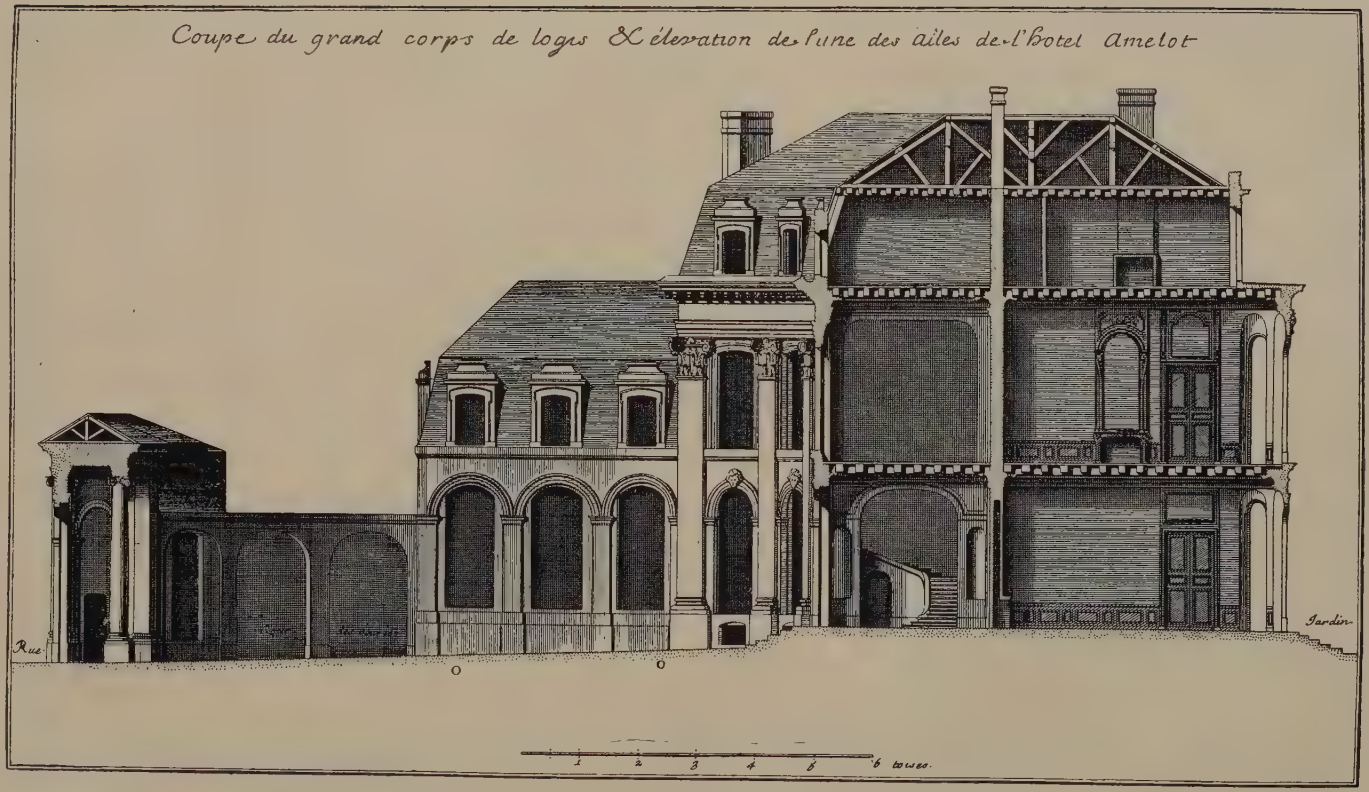

Plan general de l'Hôtel de Torcy situé rue de Bourbon à Paris,
Cour
Rue de Bourbon
Cour des Cuisines
Cour des Ecuries
Ecuries
Cuisine
Echelle de 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 Toises
A Paris chez JOMBERT, rue Dauphine

GROUND PLAN

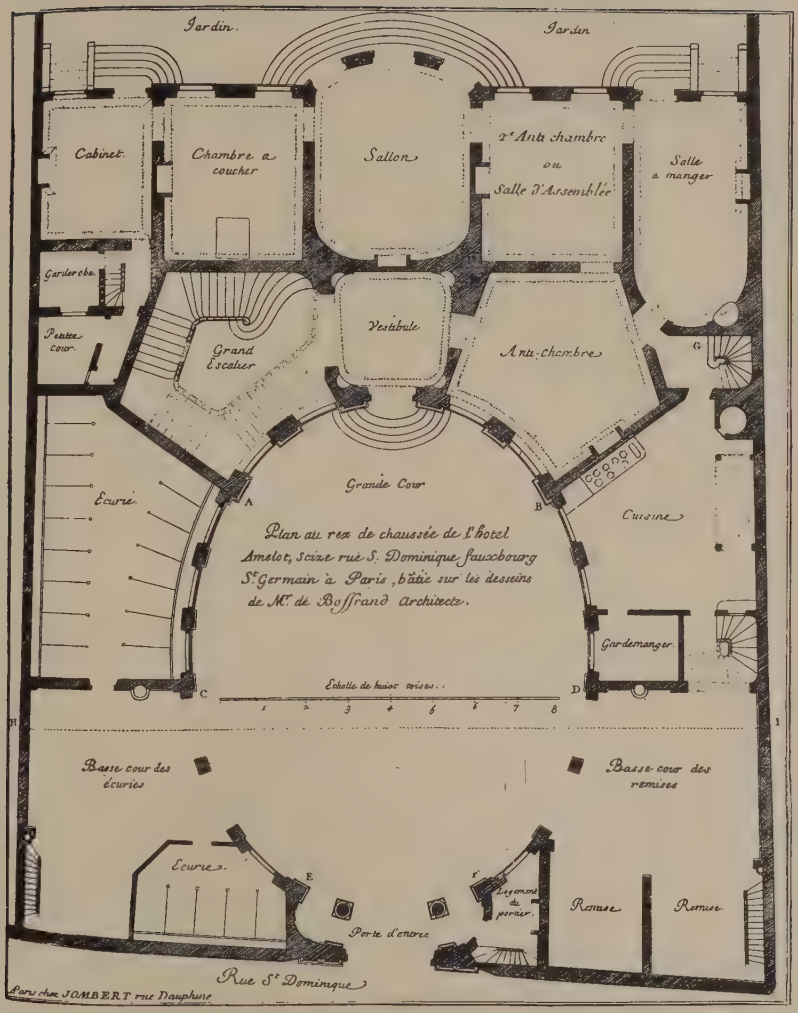
HÔTEL DE TORCY. BY BOFFRAND (p. 100)

(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, XXVI)

[II. TO FACE P. 100



SECTION OF HÔTEL AMELOT, PARIS. BY BOFFRAND (see p. 101)
(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," I, XV)



GROUND PLAN

HÔTEL AMÉLOT. BY BOFFRAND

CHIMNEY-PIECE (REGENCY). BY LE BLOND (see p. 96)
(FROM DAVILER, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE)

CEILING AT THE HÔTEL DE SOUBISE (see p. 101)
(FROM BOFFRAND, "LIVRE D'ARCHITECTURE")

dinate courts and offices, he contrived an oval forecourt, contained within the walls of two small base courts, the stables and kitchen. The entrance, on the centre line of the long axis, opened on to a vestibule with the grand staircase in an irregular compartment on the left, and an antechamber on the right, the principal rooms, *en suite* as usual, being at the back of the house, and facing the gardens. Boffrand perversely blocked the entrance to this suite from the vestibule, and access could only be obtained to it from an antechamber to the right of the entrance. "Ce que oblige de parcourir plusieurs pièces assez considérables avant que de parvenir à la personne du maître." This seemed to Blondel an excellent arrangement. He considered this Hotel one of the finest in his book, and he greatly admired the grouping of the various parts of the building on the side to the forecourt—by which Boffrand obtained a pyramidical composition. This very composition, however, prevented the oval court, which looks so striking in plan, from being realized in execution, as instead of the continuous wall face necessary to give that effect, the building jumps about at three, if not at four different levels. The design of the Hôtel Amelot is interesting, as a serious effort to get away from the beaten track both in plan and elevation, but the ambitions of the architect seem to have overshot the mark. The design does not quite come off. The site was too narrow to form a principal part of the house on the narrow half of an ellipse, and Boffrand's return to the colossal order, for the two principal storeys, involved composite capitals 4 feet 6 inches high, and an entablature 6 feet high—on a façade of 38 feet, without any blocking course, and supporting nothing but the lucarnes of the mansard roof. The arches of the ground floor are crowded in between the huge pilasters, and the scale is chaotic. One is again reminded of Vanbrugh's ungainly efforts to attain immense scale at any cost, without knowing how to do it.

Blondel mentions houses for M. Dargenson,[1] and for the Prince de Rohan, at St. Ouen, as designed by Boffrand, and he intended to illustrate them—having the highest opinion "d'un génie si excellent." He did not, however, do so—nor did he illustrate Boffrand's famous decorations at the Hôtel de Soubise, perhaps the most attractive example of French decorative art of the first half of the eighteenth century. They seem to have been carried out about the year 1740[2]—

[1] Illustrated in Boffrand's "Livre d'Architecture." The design is dull and rather coarse.

[2] Blondel ("Arch. Fran.," ii, 156) says the hotel was completed about twelve years

when Oppenord and Meissonnier were in full blast. Boffrand followed the fashion with enthusiasm. Architect though he claimed to be, he turned his back on the established principles of architectural design, substituting for its order and restraint the mere caprice of the modeller, and indeed, though officially in charge of the work, he probably left it to his decorators and plasterers. Some of the very best artists of the time were employed on this work. In the famous oval Salon, the stucco figures in the pendentives were modelled by the elder Adam and Le Lorrain, and Natoire painted scenes from the story of Psyche. "Non seulement la corniche est entièrement dorée, mais la plafond fait en calotte est couvert d'ornemens de sculpture sur un fond blanc qui se raccordent avec la rose du milieu."[1]

Beautiful as it is, its beauty is not that of architecture. The cornice has practically ceased to exist, and become a mere invasion of the ceiling by the wall asserting itself at important points by breaking out into various quirks and convolutions. The chief object of the decorator seems to have been to conceal the form and intention of the structure, and it must be admitted that he did so with exquisite skill in detail. On the other hand, this work shows little knowledge of scale, for the figures that occupy the compartments of the angles are too heavy for the delicate detail of the panels below; and in this vital matter of scale—which is the special province of the architect—the architect failed to play his part. Boffrand has always enjoyed the credit of the design, and he illustrated the decorations of the Hôtel de Soubise in full in his great book on architecture,[2] but my impression is

back. His first volume was issued in 1752, and this would bring the date to about 1740. Bauchal says 1706, but the Hôtel de Soubise was only begun in that year from the designs of De la Maire. Robert Le Lorrain, the sculptor of the splendid "Chevaux du Soleil" of the stables of the Hôtel de Rohan, died in 1743. Natoire, afterwards Director of the French Academy in Rome, died in 1777, Lambert Adam in 1759, Nicolas in 1778. M. Gonse ("La Sculpture Française," p. 228), says of the Adam, "Ce sont des artistes doués d'une grande habilité, d'une imagination vive et d'une main rapide, qualités qui conviennent aux décorations éphemères, aux machines improvisées," the very men in all Europe for the decorations of the Hôtel de Soubise.

[1] D'Argenville, "Voyage pittoresque de Paris," p. 237. The decorations of the Hôtel de Soubise are very well illustrated in Rumler's "Le Style Louis XV."

[2] Ten plates are devoted to the Hôtel de Soubise. Boffrand says that all the carving, mouldings, and the furniture of the room were gilt on a white ground, and on the ceilings the ornament was white against "bleu clair." The plates of the "Livre d'Architecture" were engraved by Lucas, Babel, Blondel, and others, and probably drawn by them as well. It is remarkable that in this book, published only some five years later, Boffrand should have made a strong protest against this fashion of torturing buildings, and remarked bitterly that "le bizarrerie est admiré sous le nom de génie."

that the real credit of the work belongs to the plasterer, the painter, and the modeller's thumb. It is hard to detect in all this delightful and accomplished fooling, the somewhat elephantine touch of the designer of the Hôtel d'Amelot and the Hôpital des Enfants Trouvés.

Meanwhile, Boffrand had been extensively employed by German princes, at dates which I am unable to ascertain [1]—but probably between 1720 and 1740. Boffrand collected these designs and published them in a vast folio entitled, "Livre d'Architecture contenant les principes généraux de cet art," together with illustrations of various buildings abroad, by "Le Sieur Boffrand, architecte du Roi, et de son Académie Royale d'Architecture, premier architecte et Inspecteur général des Ponts et Chaussées du Royaume." The book was published in Paris in 1745, with text in French and Latin, and was dedicated to the King. The "principes generaux" contain the usual platitudes of treatises on aesthetics. Boffrand had not in fact any fixed principles of design, or any definite theory of architecture. He leads off with a dissertation on "le bon goust," which, in his opinion, is the faculty of distinguishing not merely between good and bad, but between good and better.[2] But the standard is nothing more than "Ce que a plû ou deplû aux hommes les plus éclairés," and a building can only be said to be "de bon goust," when it has the sanction of "les plus éclairés," and also has observed considerations of "convenance commodité societé santé et bon sens," a definition which leaves us very much where we were. He then hit on the idea of taking the Ars Poetica of Horace and applying it, passage by passage, to architecture, on the assumption that "les sciences et les arts ont un si grand rapport que les principes des uns font principes des autres"—a position which alone shows that Boffrand had no understanding of the theory of the arts, and that his parade of philosophy was either a pretentious imposture or perhaps the honest but fatuous effort of an incompetent writer. It was stuff such as this, and the still more pretentious sciolism of the Comte de Caylus, which twenty years later exasperated Lessing into producing the finest piece of constructive criticism of the Arts that has been written [3] since the Poetics of Aristotle.

To the student, the chief value of Boffrand's book, and probably the ultimate purpose of the author, was the publication of his own

[1] The dates given in Bauchal seem to me quite untrustworthy, and in some cases, impossible.

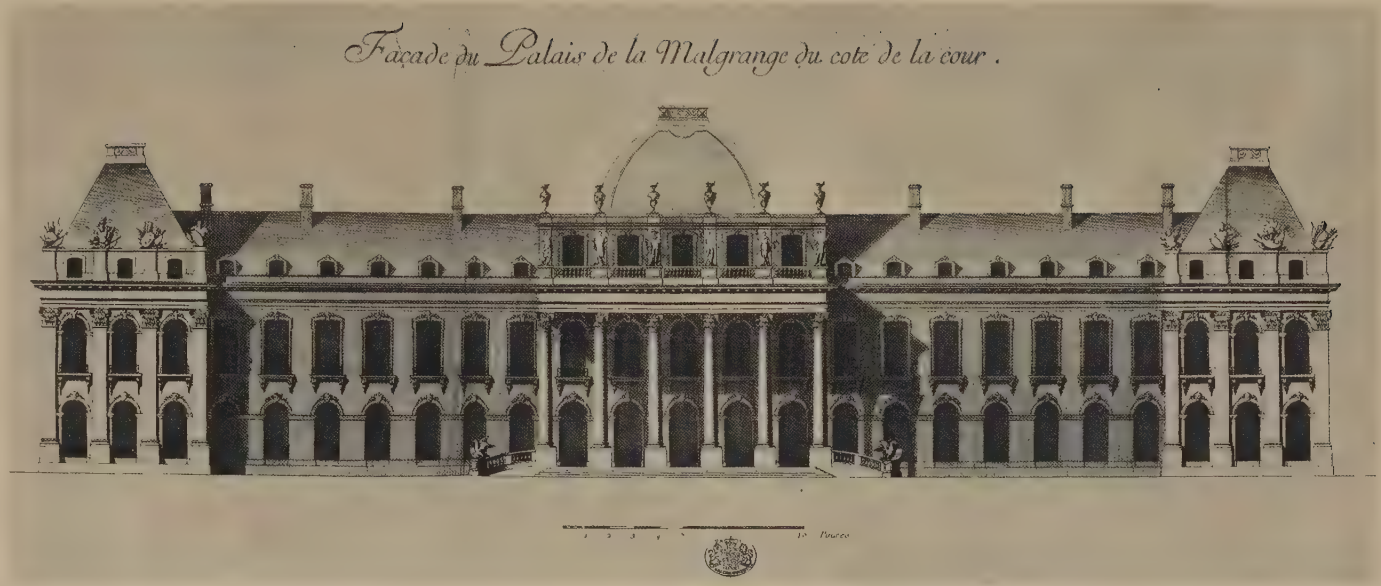
[2] "Une faculté qui distingue l'excellent d'avec le bon."

[3] The "Laocoon" appeared in 1766.

designs—more particularly those prepared for the German Princelings. They include the following: Bouchefort, near Brussels; palaces, at Nancy, La Malgrange, Lunéville, and Wurzbourg; the Hôtels de Montmorency and d'Argenson, at Paris; the remodelling of the Château de Cramayel, seven leagues from Paris; the Château d'Haroué in Lorraine, as rebuilt; the "Puits de Bicêtre;" the bridge at Sens, and a wooden bridge at Montreau, the "Portail de la Mercy" at Paris, and the decorations of the Hôtel de Soubise.

Bouchefort was a Hunting Lodge in the middle of a wood six miles out of Brussels, for Maximilian Emmanuel, Elector of Bavaria. Boffrand designed this on an octagon plan, set in a circular court 300 feet across. The central salon was 60 feet in diameter, rising up through two storeys to a height of 63 feet with a gallery at the first floor, and above the vault was a prodigious lantern or look-out, 120 feet high from the floor to the Elector's crown at the top. The building was only carried up to the first floor, and was never completed. Boffrand's work at Nancy was important. The design of the Cathedral at Nancy—the interior of which is an accomplished piece of work—has always been assigned to J. H. Mansart and Boffrand. The latter, however, did not include it in his works, and it was too important to be omitted had he in fact designed it. His authentic works at Nancy included the Palace of Duke Leopold, which stood at the further end of the Place de La Carrière; the Hôtel de Craon in the Place, and a Palace for the Duke, known as La Malgrange, about a mile out of Nancy. The Duke's Palace at Nancy was planned on a great scale, with an internal court 175 feet by 252 feet, entered by five archways.[1] Only the front was carried out, and this was destroyed when Héré remodelled Nancy for Stanislas about twenty years later. The palace of La Malgrange was to have had an "avant cour" leading to a "grande cour," with "basse cours" at the sides. The main building was to be 325 feet long and 168 feet deep, and contained an oval salon 60 feet by 42 feet, by 42 feet high. The elevation is the most attractive of any of Boffrand's designs. He used here a colossal order in the centre and end pavilions, and the old-fashioned steep French roof, surmounted by square platforms and balustrades. Instead of his usual ambitious efforts to do something

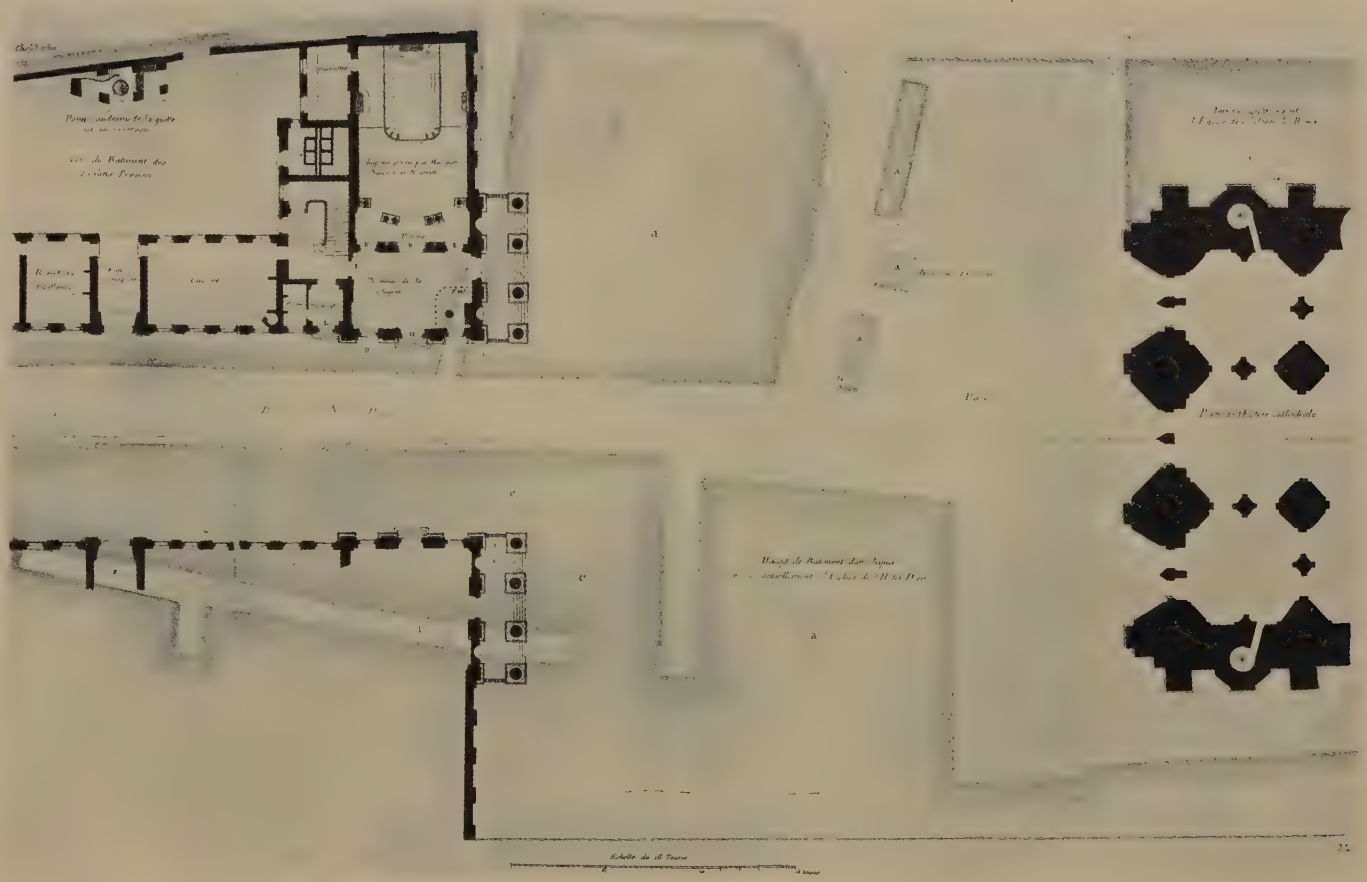
[1] See plan of Nancy, 1758. I am unable to trace any remains of this building. The existing building at the end of the Carrière with the hemicycles at either end was built from Héré's designs in 1756. See "Receuil des Fondations . . . faits par le Roi de Pologne," Part II, chap. xvi, p. 96.



DESIGN FOR THE PALAIS DE LA MALGRANGE, NEAR NANCY. BY BOFFRAND (see pp. 104, 119)

(FROM BOFFRAND'S "LIVRE D'ARCHITECTURE")

(Most of it destroyed. Now a theological college)



BOFFRAND'S DESIGN FOR IMPROVING THE PARVIS, NOTRE-DAME, PARIS (see p. 106)

(The shaded parts show buildings to be removed)

strange and new, he here did a plain thing in a plain way, and the result is a very satisfactory design.[1] He seems to have been saved by the good sense of his client, for he also gives a second design, which was rejected, but which he seems to have preferred himself. This provided a circular Loggia, 144 feet in diameter, with an inner peristyle 45 feet in diameter, above which ran a broad gallery with a vaulted roof 72 feet above the floor. From the Loggia, four wings ran out, set out not on the diagonal lines but at angles of about 60°, into which were crowded the principal rooms and the staircases. In the audacity of its scale it suggests Vanbrugh, but the design was an impracticable freak, and Boffrand and most of his noble clients seem to have been afflicted with megalomania. The Château de Lunéville—a summer residence of Duke Leopold—was another enormous design;[2] and the residence of the Prince Bishop of Wurzbourg seems to have been meant to challenge comparison with Versailles. It was to be 600 feet long by 300 feet. The entrance passed between two main staircases, which, together with the passage way or "salle des gardes," occupy in the plan a space of 240 feet by 62 feet. The "salle des gardes" opened on to an enclosed and covered space, which is called a salon, but was in fact a *porte cochère*, large enough for carriages with eight horses—the German custom being to land under cover and not in the open, as in France.[3] A Chapel is shown, 50 feet wide, with an oval choir 65 feet by 45 feet at right angles to the nave, and the building included a suite of rooms for use in the summer only. It appears that the original design had been made by a certain Neuman in 1724. This was submitted to De Cotte, and Boffrand was called in to edit the designs. The works were suspended after the death of the Prince Bishop, and Boffrand does not seem to have known anything more about the building. Fashions were changing so fast in the middle of the eighteenth century, that what one man began his successor seldom took the trouble, or had the means to finish.

In 1725 Boffrand was employed by the Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, to carry out some considerable repairs to the south transept of Notre Dame, and he also designed a new Doric archway to

[1] D'Argenville says this building also was destroyed. His account of Boffrand is unusually complete.

[2] Since turned into a cavalry barrack.

[3] Boffrand, who also gives the curious information that all floor timbers were of pine, not of oak, the pine being straighter and less liable to sag, and that in all ceilings reeds were used instead of laths, and the plaster was composed of lime, sand, and "boure."

the court of the cloisters on the north side. His last work was the Hôpital des Enfants Trouvés, near Notre Dame in Paris, built in 1748 and destroyed in 1865. The design (a most ungainly one) is given in Blondel's "Arch. Franc."[1] Boffrand used a colossal order, running through three storeys and a frieze of disproportionate depth, with modillions from the architrave to the soffit of the cornice, a development of one of the worst licences of J. H. Mansart, used here in order to provide space for lights in the frieze. Instead of a blocking course or balustrade, the roof started immediately from the edge of the cornice, without any gutter. The chief interest of the design was Boffrand's scheme for the improvement of the Paris Notre Dame. He proposed to clear away certain old buildings, to form an open space[2] in front of the west front of Notre Dame, with a street 60 feet wide on the axis line of the Cathedral, flanked on the north side by the Hôpital des Enfants Trouvés, and on the south by an Hotel Dieu, to be built at a later date, with identical façades. It was a fine scheme, perhaps suggested by Gabriel's Place de la Bourse at Bordeaux. Boffrand entered the great Competition in 1748 for the Place Louis XV, and prepared no less than five plans. Patte illustrates the designs for the Place Dauphine, that for the Halles, and that for the space between the Louvre and the Tuileries. Each of these involved large demolitions and reconstructions on a vast scale. The design for the Place Dauphine is the best. This provided two three-storey pavilions, with quadrants running back to a lofty triumphal arch. In the centre of the Place, and opposite the statue of Henri IV, there was to be a lofty column in the manner of Trajan's Column, supporting a bronze figure of the King, 20 feet high. The total height was to be 150 feet, and, as appears from the engraving, though it was a bold and picturesque idea, it would have reduced all the buildings in its neighbourhood to insignificance. The scheme was not adopted.

Boffrand was nearly eighty when he made these designs, and the older he got the more he seems to have concentrated on vast size, regardless of all other considerations.[3] His taste was uncertain, and he had no

[1] Vol. II. Blondel must have been alive to its defects, but defended it on the grounds that "le bâtiment devoit servir d'issue et d'accompagnement a un des plus grands monuments que nous ayons en France," and therefore that a certain "grandeur des parties" was necessary.

[2] From the front of Notre Dame to the centre of the pillars of the porticoes facing was 180 feet.

[3] Particulars of these designs are given in my account of the great competition, chap. xxv.

fine sense of proportion. His designs seem to have been largely experimental. Indeed, they almost tempt one to think that he regarded architecture as an immense practical joke, and, being excellent company and a charming man, he appears to have enjoyed uninterrupted opportunities for the exercise of his humour. The same thing happened in the case of Vanbrugh—a very clever man, of a fine presence, and a most agreeable wit, but, as is evident from the details of his work, possessed of little knowledge of architecture beyond what he had picked up from illustrated books and stage scenery. Yet Vanbrugh also was entrusted with the design of two of the most colossal houses built in England in the eighteenth century. Boffrand, with less ability and less imagination than Vanbrugh, had more knowledge of the technique of architecture; but it appears both from his writings and his works that he never went to the heart of the matter; never regarded architecture as a serious art, limited and inspired by practical conditions. His contemporaries all thought well of him. Blondel talks of his genius and also of his excellent modesty. D'Argenville says he was the least greedy of men, and free from the base jealousy that robs other men of their work, being, as the old translation of Vitruvius has it, "desired and not desirous of works." "Boffrand étoit agréeable dans la conversation, d'une commerce amiable, et d'un enjouement naturel que la vieillesse n'avoit fait qu'augmenter. Il cherchoit incessamment à se divertir et aimoit beaucoup la raillerie," a very human and irresponsible person of a rare and attractive type. He died in 1754, aged eighty-eight, a poor man, having lost most of his money in speculation, and finding himself unable to retrieve his fortunes from the portraits and snuffboxes with which Princes and Bishops were in the habit of rewarding his services.

CHAPTER XXIV

SERVANDONI, HÉRÉ

D'ARGENVILLE'S account of Germain Boffrand suggests that he may have arrived at architecture by way of the theatre. There is no doubt at all that this was the case with Servandoni, who made his reputation by his staging of operas and "Spectacles." It is true he became an "architecte du Roi," but his architectural work, with one exception, is of little importance, and he really ranks with the Bibiena family of Vienna, artists of inexhaustible melodramatic invention, past-masters in the art of producing immense effects for temporary purposes. Two far greater artists, Baldassare Peruzzi, who more or less invented modern stage scenery, and Inigo Jones, who introduced it to England, had been pioneers in stagecraft, but they had passed on from this to architecture. Servandoni, a most ingenious improvisatore, made one or two excursions into that art, but the real business of his life was that of being the greatest showman of the eighteenth century.

Jean Gerome Servandoni was born at Lyons[1] in 1695, and was the son of a carrier plying between Lyons and Italy. According to D'Argenville he went to Rome quite young, entered the studio of J. P. Panini, and studied architecture under J. J. de Rossi. The story is doubtful. As Panini was also born at Piacenza in 1695, he could hardly have established his reputation at a date sufficiently early for Servandoni to work in his studio. J. J. de Rossi was a well-known draughtsman and engraver of architecture,[2] and Servandoni is said to have gone to him in order to learn to draw architecture correctly in his

[1] Blondel and the "Biographie Générale" says Florence. D'Argenville ("Vie des fameux Architectes," i, 447) says Lyons, and adds that those who knew him at Rome said that he assumed the name of Servandoni to conceal his father's trade. In the minute of his reception by the Academy of Painting and Sculpture in 1731 he is called Jean Gerome, not Jean Nicolas as by D'Argenville.

[2] Under the name of J. J. de Rubeis he published in 1684 a volume of engravings of the sixteenth and seventeenth century churches of Rome.

paintings, a necessary part of a painter's equipment in the eighteenth century, and more particularly for the painter-decorator, who might at any time be called upon to paint perspectives of architecture to conceal an awkward piece of wall; moreover, in the background was the amateur and the virtuoso, who, in the eighteenth century, knew a good deal more about architecture than his successor to-day. All the story amounts to is that Servandoni studied architectural drawing and composition in Rome. According to the "Biographie Générale," he wandered thence to Lisbon, where he designed the Italian Theatre, and was made a Chevalier of the Order of Christ. In 1724 he appeared in Paris with a great reputation as a designer of stage scenery and effects, and was entrusted with the *mise en scène* of the Opera. His first effort was brilliantly successful. D'Argenville says, "En 1728 il développa pour la première fois, dans Orion, la magie de son art. Elle transporta tout Paris près des embouchures du Nil, au milieu des ruines et des débris des pyramides. Qu'on se répresente d'affreux rochers sur lesquels le soleil darde ses rayons, le spectacle d'une nature sauvage, d'heureux effets de perspective, à l'illusion desquels la lumière et les couleurs ajoutent, et l'on aura une idée des talens de Servandoni. Ils firent prendre à l'opera une nouvelle forme." Within the next eighteen years he set on the stage more than sixty operas, with scenery ranging from the Palace of Nineveh to the Mosque of Scanderberg. In the middle of the eighteenth century the quickest way to the heart of the Parisian was to find him new sensations, something fresh to look at, mysterious effects which thrilled him without undue demands on his emotion. So Oppenord and Meissonnier had won the fashion, so Law had found his market and his fate twenty years before, and the interest in the grosser forms of spiritualism, so characteristic of the generation before the Revolution, was a symptom of that general malaise and unstable morale that culminated in the smash of 1789. It was to this restless passion for new things that Servandoni appealed. He transported his spectators from the intrigues and frivolities of Paris to the Elysian fields, and enabled them in the security of their boxes to revel in the ferocity of nature, storm and tempest, and the ruins of architecture. At a slightly later date, the taste for ruins amid savage scenery will be general, and people of fashion will be tumbling over each other to secure the sentimental scenes of Hubert Robert. The old regime was already breaking up. Even the Academy of Painting, the citadel of tradition, "empressée à s'incorporer les artistes célébres," admitted the brilliant young stage manager as a member in 1731, and he pre-

sented on his election a picture of a temple and ruins, "où il y a des effets pittoresque assez heureux."[1] It was an ominous sign that in the same year that they elected Servandoni the Academy of Painting and Sculpture elected as honorary member the Comte de Caylus, "connoisseur profond."[2]

In 1732 Servandoni won the competition for the completion of the west front of S. Sulpice; the work was begun at once, and by special permission of the King, Servandoni was created by the Pope a Count of the Order of S. John Lateran. In spite of this remarkable success in architecture he seems to have reverted to his favourite stage management. In 1738 he was given the use of the Salle des Machines in the Tuileries, and here he produced a series of spectacles, beginning with a reproduction of S. Peter's in Rome. This was followed up by tableaux representing the story of Pandora. More than 2,000 figures in relief, including, says D'Argenville, live persons, represented all the gods and goddesses of mythology. His most brilliant effect, however, was the fête in celebration of the marriage of Louise Elizabeth of France to Don Philip Infanta of Spain. D'Argenville's account is not clear. He says that Servandoni took a site between the Pont Neuf and the Pont Royal, 118 feet wide by 15 deep, and here he constructed a building in the manner of a Greek Temple, with four Doric columns 4 feet 6 inches in diameter and 32 feet high on a continuous stylobate. These columns carried an entablature with a balustrade, and statues of "toutes les divinités du paganisme" above the columns. On the three inner rows of columns he raised an attic storey; and the total height of this "grande machine" was 80 feet, I presume above the water level, but if the site was only 15 feet wide it could not have been constructed at all. In the river itself he concealed two barges with artificial rocks, and on them he constructed an octagonal salon large enough to accommodate 180 musicians. Both "machines" were illuminated with coloured lights. The King and his court were present, and some 80,000 spectators witnessed the illuminations. Among other

[1] The Academy, to show their high opinion of Servandoni, elected him by unanimous declaration without balloting. The Comte de Caylus was elected in December, 1731, "amateur Honoraire" and Panini in the following year.

[2] Mariette says: "Pendant longtemps le Comte de Caylus lui a servi de protecteur, et d'homme à opposer a nos architectes qu'il avoit pris en grippe." The Academy of Architecture was too shrewd to submit to being lectured by a blatant amateur such as the Comte de Caylus, and the Comte de Caylus never forgave their indifference. Mariette, who was an intimate personal friend of M. de Caylus, put the best face on the matter that he could.

scenes the descent of Aeneas into Hades, the adventures of Ulysses, and the story of "Hero and Leander" were given in the Salle des Machines. In 1743 the Pope conferred on Servandoni the military order of Christ.[1]

In 1749 he was invited to direct the illuminations in London, to celebrate the peace of Aix-La-Chapelle, which were said to have cost 100,000 guineas. Servandoni married in London, and on his return to Paris he produced a vast project for the celebration of the peace. A gallery was to be formed along the river front from the Tuileries eastward to take 600,000 persons. It was to be higher than the gallery of the Louvre itself, and the Temple of Peace was to be formed on an artificial rock in the bed of the river. In 1755 he was summoned to Poland, where he was appointed Architect Decorator to His Majesty of Poland, and, in fact, all the courts of Europe seem to have wanted him. He was called in at the Court of Vienna, and he nearly ruined the Duke of Wirtemberg by his extravagant schemes. D'Argenville says that his projects were innumerable, but as he never counted the cost either for himself or others, they were either impracticable, or, if attempted, landed both Servandoni and his employers in hopeless difficulties. He spent much of his time abroad in order to escape his creditors, and, though he had a pension of 4,000 livres a year in the form of a permanent charge on the Parish of S. Sulpice, he became involved in a lawsuit with the curé, and died a poor man in 1766.

Blondel, writing about 1750 ("Arch. Fran.," vol. ii, p. 37), says of Servandoni, "Il est actuellement vivant et jouit d'une réputation, que sa haute capacité, son experience et le nombre considerable des travaux qu'il a fait exécuter dans differens genres, lui ont justement acquise." He mentions among his works the parish church of Coulange in Burgundy, the high altar at Sens, and of the Chartreux at Lyons, and a clever staircase at the Hôtel d'Auvergne in Paris (illustrated in "Arch. Fran.," vol. i, p. 261). He also refers to buildings by him in Spain, and at London for the Prince of Wales, who allowed him a pension of 8,000 livres. Servandoni had great opportunities, but he was hopelessly generous and improvident, and the career of "ce génie rare et excellent," as Blondel calls him, was, on the whole, a failure. His reputation as an architect[2] rests entirely on his design for the west front of S. Sulpice. Oppenord's proposals for this were rejected, and

[1] Apparently distinct from the Portuguese order already conferred on him.

[2] D'Argenville mentions eleven other works, none of importance, including a theatre at Chambord for the Maréchal de Saxe.

Servandoni produced a design of a totally different character. In judging this design it has to be recollected that the pediment, 120 feet wide by 26 feet high, which he designed for the centre, was never carried out, and that the existing towers are not his design.[1] The merit of the west front is the unbroken entablature on a front of 184 feet, and its great scale (it is 126 feet high to the top of the balustrade), but it is an unsatisfactory design. It was not a very happy idea to divide up a front, 126 feet high, into two orders, without any centre-piece or "avant-corps." The pediment would not have composed very well with the Towers, the treatment of the bays between the columns of both orders is commonplace, and the design, as a whole, shows little feeling for great composition, little of that genuine architectural sense which conceives of buildings not as screens or façades, but as masses. Servandoni's design for the front of S. Sulpice is much what one would expect from the designer of the drop scenes of theatres. Both here and in his scheme for the great competition of 1748, his ideas were vague and grandiose, little more than the impressions of a rather hasty mind. In the great competition he proposed for the Place de Louis XV a vast Assembly Hall, capable of accommodating 25,000 persons, which was to be adorned with 360 columns and 136 arches. Servandoni may have been the finest designer of a "spectacle" there has ever been, but whether an Italian, or merely a Frenchman of no class, he showed little consciousness of the splendid tradition of French architecture, and he holds no place in its great succession. The only merit that Blondel could really find in S. Sulpice was that its "grandeur annonce à nos architectes Français une route presque nouvelle." This is true, but it was a road down hill.

The career of Emmanuel Héré de Corny was in striking contrast to that of Servandoni. For the latter the world, or rather Europe, was his opportunity—for Héré, one province of France, and, with one or two exceptions, one city in that province. He is not known to have gone to Italy, or even to Paris, and yet the work that he did at Nancy for Stanislas, the ex-king of Poland, remains one of the most remarkable achievements of the eighteenth century. Héré was born at Lunéville in 1705, and was the son of Paul Héré, Cashier of Buildings to S. A. R. Leopold, Duke of Lorraine, the Prince to whom Mansart

[1] Chalgrin completed the north tower in 1777; the south tower was designed by an architect named Maclaurin, who superseded Servandoni. It was probably Maclaurin who proposed the third order referred to by Blondel in lieu of the pediment. The towers shown in Blondel's elevation are better than the design actually carried out.

WEST ELEVATION OF S. SULPICE, PARIS. BY SERVANDONI (p. 112)
(FROM BLONDEL, "ARCHITECTURE FRANÇAISE," II)

was lent in 1700 for the design of his new palace. What happened to Mansart's design is not known, but about 1711 Boffrand appeared at Nancy, designed la Malgrange, which was stopped in 1715, and the vast new palace of Prince Leopold at the end of the Carrière, which was begun in 1717, and carried on till 1720. Though it is not known as a fact, it is possible that through his father's official influence, young Héré may have begun his training in Boffrand's office, but there were good architects in Nancy itself from whom he may have received his training, for Boffrand's buildings were stopped in 1720, and it was not till 1745 that Stanislas Leczinsky began his grand scheme for the linking up of the two towns of Nancy.[1]

At this date (1745) the two towns were quite distinct. The old town of Nancy to the north, founded by the Dukes of Lorraine in the twelfth century, was separated from the new town established by the Grand Duke Charles III of Lorraine, by a wide unoccupied space, and though the outer moat ran round both towns, each town had its independent system of defence. Even as late as 1758 the old town of Nancy is shown divided from the new by a moat, and only connected with it by the roadway passing under Stanislas' new Triumphal arch. At the end of the sixteenth century the Dukes of Lorraine, instead of enlarging the old town, had laid out an entirely new town to the south of it to a plan made by an Italian engineer, Jerôme Citoni, and M. Hallays says that the streets so laid out are in certain cases still in use in the modern town, a remarkable early example of deliberate town planning. Throughout the seventeenth century Lorraine suffered from war, epidemics, and famine, and among the conditions of the Peace of Ryswyck (1697) it was stipulated that the fortifications of the new town at Nancy should be dismantled, with the result that the space between the old town and the north part of the new town was left in a deplorable state. Leopold had contented himself with his buildings in the old town, designed by Boffrand, but both he and his architect were too ambitious, and except the Hôtel de Craon in the Carrière, none of their schemes were completed. When Stanislas came to Nancy in 1736, he found it necessary to conciliate the Lorrainers, on whom he had been unceremoniously dumped as Duke of Lorraine by his son-in-law, Louis XV,[2] and it was this reason, and also a kindly temperament and

[1] See "Nancy," by André Hallays, p. 13, and the bird's-eye view of the town in 1646.

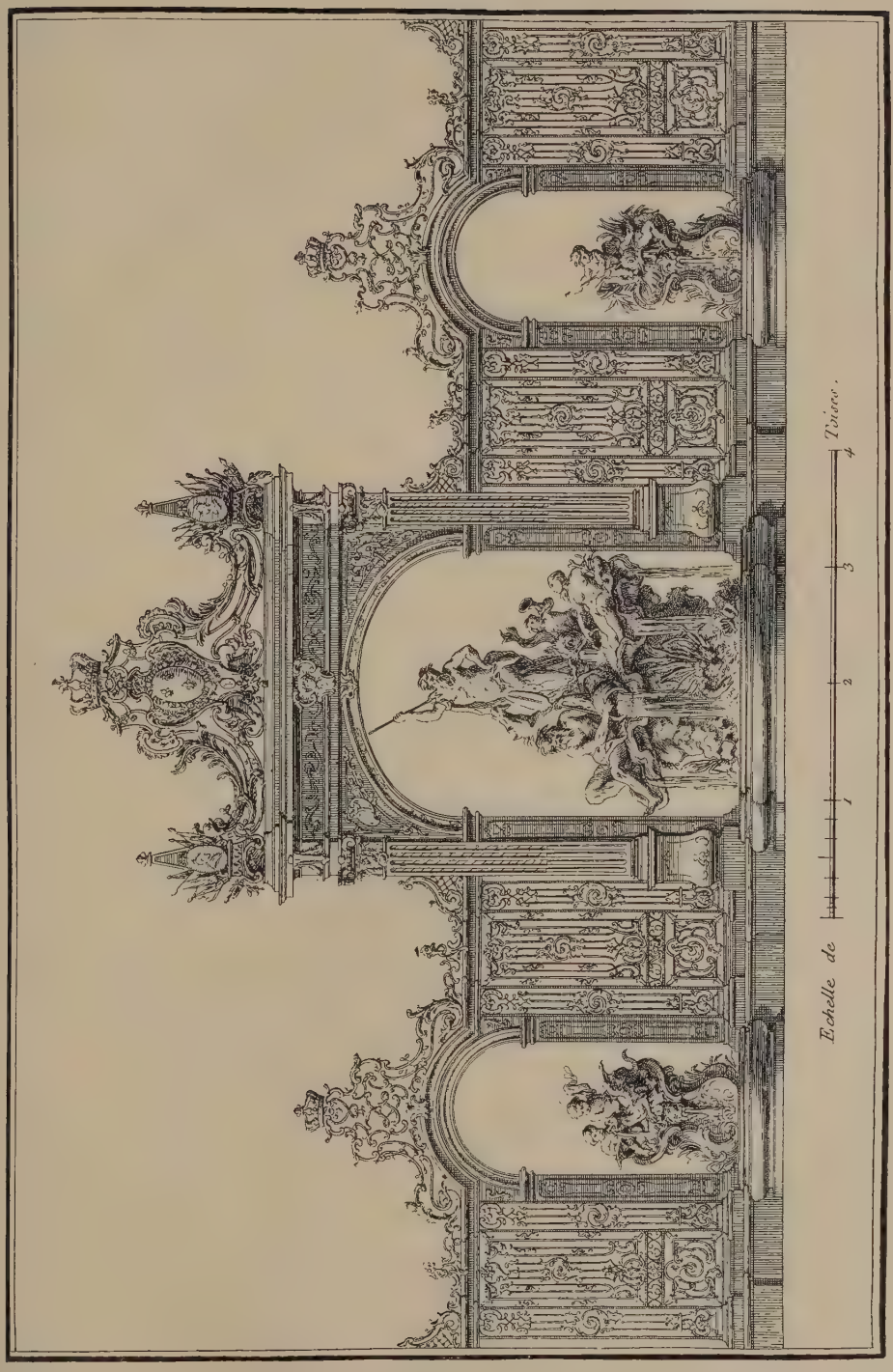
[2] Stanislas Leczinsky, after occupying the throne of Poland three times unsuccessfully, retired to Dantzig, where he held out for six months against the Russians, and finally escaped to France in 1736, or as the Comptable in the "Compte Général des

a passion for building, that led him to undertake many charitable schemes, and also to devote himself to the improvement of the town of Nancy. His position was altogether anomalous, since, though entitled Duke of Lorraine and Bar and King of Poland, his sovereignty was merely formal. The province was administered by the *Intendant* of Picardy on behalf of the French King, and Stanislas subsisted on a pension allowed him by the latter, and though it is nowhere so stated, it seems certain that the cost of his embellishments of Nancy was borne by France. He was thus limited in his expenditure, and he considered it politic to employ no artists but natives of Lorraine, but he was fortunate in his selection—Héré for his architect-in-chief, Lamour the smith, Guibal and Cyfflé, the makers of the fountains, Söntgen, the modeller of the children of the Place Royale and the Carrière, excellent artists, less accomplished than the great masters of Paris, yet forming a team that pulled well together, and produced a work more harmonious and complete within its own limits than anything of its kind in France.

It is due to the memory of Stanislas to state that his first care was for various charitable and religious institutions in Nancy, Lunéville and elsewhere in Lorraine. In 1739 a large sum was devoted to the Seminary of Jesuit Missionaries; in 1740 81,100 livres was spent on a Hôpital pour les Pauvres Malades, and similar sums were spent between 1740 and 1750 on a Maison de Charité at Lunéville, on various schools and scholarships, on a soup kitchen, on a Bursary to advance money to merchants, on State granaries, on a Literary Society, and chairs of Mathematics and Philosophy,[1] and on the churches of Notre Dame de Bonsecours (1740) and S. Rémy (1742) at Nancy. A decree of the Council of Finance dealing with the site of the Hôtel de Ville was issued in 1739, but nothing was done till 1751. In that year the Place Royale was begun and the works proceeded steadily

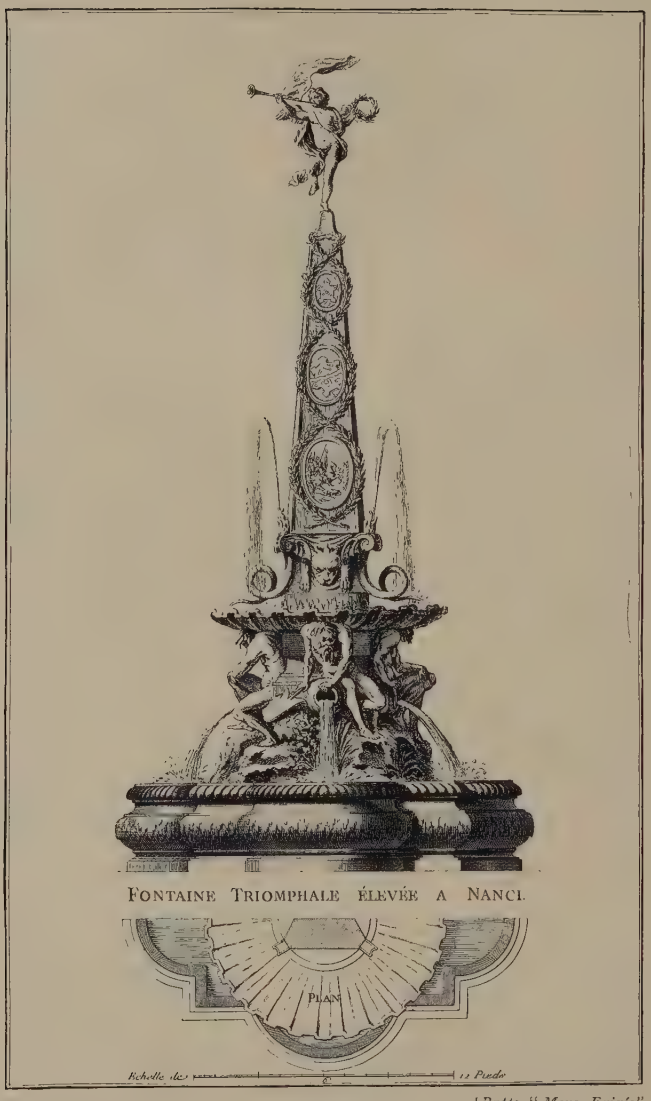
Dépenses," p. 15, elegantly puts it, "Stanislas I, quittant sa patrie pour pacifier l'Europe, vint combler les vœux de la Lorraine, et en essuyer les larmes." Louis XV made him Duke of Lorraine and Bar for life, and allowed him to retain the title of King of Poland. Louis XV married his daughter, Maria Leczinsky, and, as is well known, treated her badly; in spite of which Stanislas made the Place Royale in his honour. He died in 1766 at the age of eighty-nine, a kindly profligate old gentleman.

[1] See "Recueil des Fondations et établissements faits par Le Roi de Pologne," etc., 1762, and "Compte Général de la Dépense des Edifices et bâtimens que le Roi de Pologne, Duc de Lorraine et de Bar, a fait construire pour l'embellissement de la ville de Nancy, depuis 1751 jusqu'a 1759," Lunéville, 1761. The latter volume gives in detail the cost of all the buildings and works, and the names of the artists and tradesmen employed.



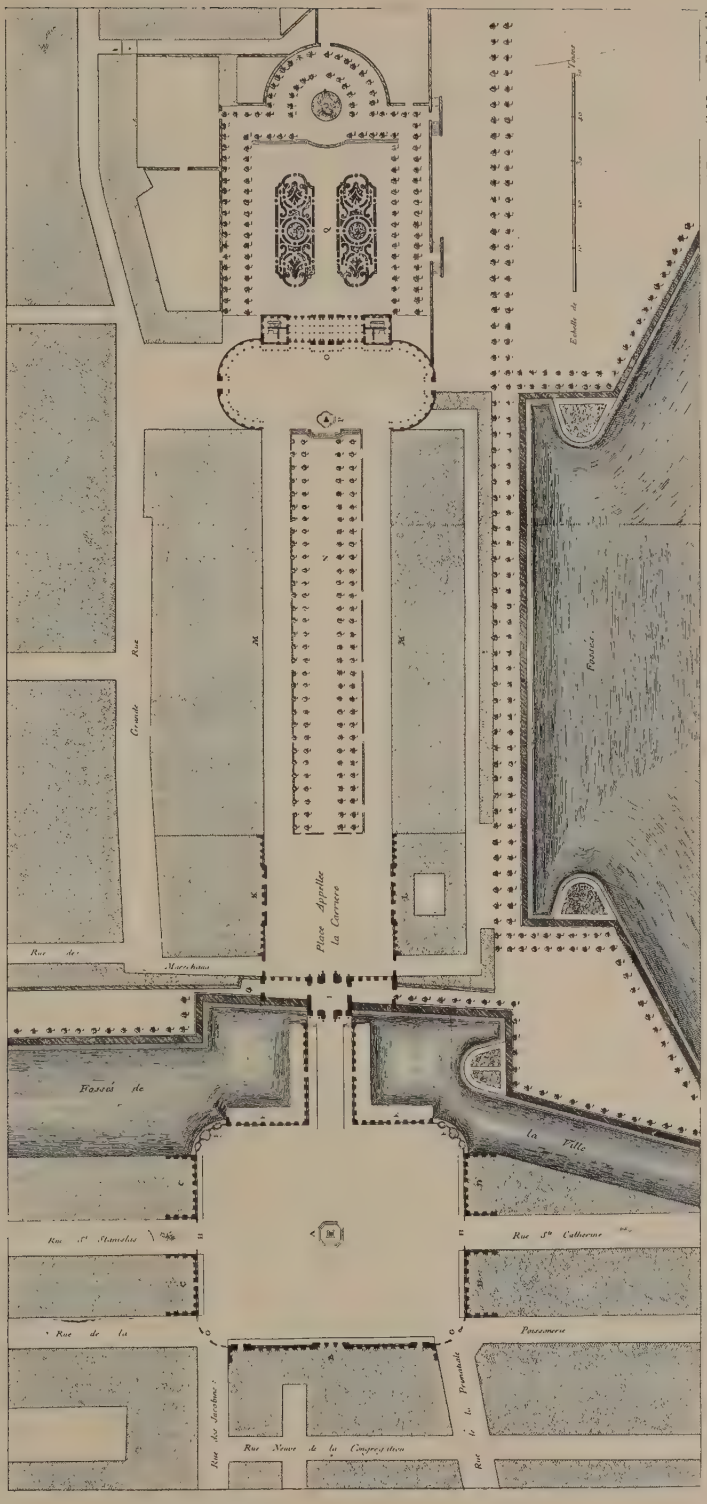
[*Patte, "Mon. Erigés"*

THE GRILLES, NANCY, BY LAMOUR. FOUNTAINS BY GUIBAL (p. 114)



[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

FOUNTAIN, NANCY. BY CYFFLÉ. ALTERED IN EXECUTION (see p. 114)



CENERAL PLAN OF LAY OUT OF NANCY BY HÉRÉ (see p. 115)

THE HEMICYCLE, NANCY (p. 115)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

on a consecutive design, working from the Hôtel de Ville on the south side of the Place Royale, through the triumphal arch up the Carrière to the Hôtel de l'Intendance and the Hemicycles at the extreme north end of the Carrière. The whole of the work was completed in eight years at a total cost of 3,711,286 francs, 16 livres, 8 deniers.[1]

The problem before Héré was to link up the two towns. He began with the Place Royale, 360 feet by 300 feet, the south side occupied by the Hôtel de Ville, the east and west by two blocks of buildings, separated by the Rue S. Stanislas on the west and the Rue S. Catherine on the east, these streets being aligned on the Royal Monument in the centre of the Place, and each terminating at the farther ends with triumphal archways. The south-east and south-west openings to streets were screened by iron grilles, and the north-east and north-west angles, which in fact opened on to the old ramparts and moat, were filled with the admirable fountains of Neptune and Amphitrite by Guibal, and the sumptuous iron-work of Lamour. On the north side, opposite the Hôtel de Ville, Héré placed two lower ranges of buildings, divided by a roadway 60 feet wide between the buildings, running due north under the triumphal archway to the Carrière. This was a long open space, 810 feet long by 180 feet wide, with houses on either side. On the right hand stood the Hôtel de Craon, built from Boffrand's designs. Héré adapted this as Government offices, and erected a corresponding building opposite on the left-hand side. He then designed a uniform façade for the buildings on either side up to the north end of the Carrière, where again he built two more important buildings, or pavilions, and laid out the Carrière as a promenade with a lime avenue and groups of sculpture. At the north end of the Carrière he formed the "Hemicycle," a Place 300 feet out to out by 120 feet (the diameter of the Hemicycles) and on the north side of this he placed the Hôtel de L'Intendance, which, as originally designed, was open on the ground storey so that the public passed freely through to the gardens beyond, laid out in the best manner of Le Nôtre, and free from any trace of the landscape manner.[2] The whole scheme is delightfully simple and logical in its conception, and yet so varied in detail that it is full of unexpected charm. Indeed, it is this fancifulness, always hinting its existence under severe architectural restraint, that makes Héré's work

[1] This sum included all the ironwork by Lamour, all the sculpture and ornament and all excavations and levellings. Though Héré supplied the design for the façades of the Carrière, the buildings were put up at the cost of the individual owners.

[2] The gardens have since been vulgarized by the landscape gardener.

at Nancy so attractive. Keenly alive to balance and symmetry, he played with perfect mastery on motives that in less competent hands would have seemed exuberant and out of place, and the scheme is so complete and consummate that one is hardly conscious of the real difficulties of his problem—the old moats and ramparts, the untidy end of the new town at the south end, and the fragment of Duke Leopold's palace at the farther end. When, moreover, one thinks of the millions that Mansart squandered at Versailles, one wonders how the work at Nancy was done for the money; a single year's expenditure at Versailles (1680) was nearly two millions more than the total cost of the whole of the work at Nancy; and three years[1] labour on the disastrous aqueduct of Maintenon cost 5,973,248 francs, as against the 3,711,286 francs, 16 sous, 8 deniers, spent at Nancy. The total cost of the Hôtel de Ville was 498,774 francs, 1 sou, 9 deniers, and of the Hôtel de l'Intendance, the Hemicycles and the gardens behind it 849,006 francs, 3 sous, 1 denier. The cost of Clagny, one of the Royal Mistresses' houses (1674-80), was considerably more than the two put together,[2] and Marly between 1681 and 1687 cost more than double.[3] The criticisms that I have ventured to make on J. H. Mansart may seem harsh to those unacquainted with his methods and his almost illimitable opportunities.[4] Given an employer like Louis XIV and such chances as Mansart had, an architect must have been an extremely stupid man if he failed to do something considerable and out of the common. The point is whether Mansart's work was equal to his opportunities. I doubt if any competent judge of architecture will maintain that it was, whereas Héré, with the merest fraction of his resources and advantages, and working single-handed in a provincial capital, conceived and carried out a scheme which remains to this day an admitted masterpiece. Indeed, Nancy is the *locus classicus* of fine town-planning, unique in this regard among modern cities.

In the Place Royale, Héré used a colossal Corinthian order running through the first and second floors, and is said to have taken this from Boffrand's design for the Hôtel de Craon, but he made the motive wholly his own by his use of it, and by the treatment of the

[1] 1685-87. Moreover, the franc or livre was worth a good deal more in 1685 than it was in 1755.

[2] 1,986,209 livres, 9 sous, 7 deniers. [3] 2,877,943 livres, 8 sous, 3 deniers.

[4] It is only through a study of the "Comptes," the Memoirs and Correspondence of the time, and the minutes of the Academies, that it is possible to form an idea of what these actually were, and the further one pushes these studies, the more unfavourable is the conclusion.

balustrade, the pedestals and urns, above the entablature. The Hôtel de Ville is one of the most satisfactory in France, with its dignified façade and the wonderful staircase, not less remarkable for its construction and masonry than for Lamour's balustrade. The staircase, which rises with the vigour and vitality of a steel spring, is entirely constructed in masonry by means of a scientific application of the principle of the arch. The only defect on the exterior of the Hôtel de Ville is the anticlimax of the clock with its consoles and volutes set above the central pediment, which produces an unsatisfactory outline and makes the pediment absurd. It is not shown in Patte's engraving, but is in the little prints that head the accounts in the "Compte Général," and I imagine it was added by Héré as an afterthought, possibly at the suggestion of the ingenious Stanislas. In its general treatment it is not unlike the Capitole at Toulouse, where a similar fault occurs, but the Hôtel de Ville at Nancy is a more accomplished piece of architecture than the Capitole, better spaced, juster in its proportions, and more refined in its details.

At the Hôtel de l'Intendance,[1] completed in 1756, Héré gave up the colossal order, and returned to the treatment of order above order, Ionic, Corinthian, and an Attic order, which had been the favourite method of J. H. Mansart, and must have seemed to a Parisian of the eighteenth century something of a provincialism. The reason for its use is probably to be found in the Hemicycles at either end of the space in front, formed with a beautiful Ionic order supporting an entablature and a balustrade, and it was essential to the effect to continue this colonnade along the façade of the building. The pavilion to the left of the Carrière, facing the Hôtel de l'Intendance, was assigned to Héré by Stanislas, who allowed him 20,000 francs for the site and 85,071 francs, 12 sous, 8 deniers,[2] to build the house, and this is the only trace that I can find of any fee or salary. There is an entry in the accounts of a payment to Héré of 4,050 francs 0 sous, 2 deniers: "Pour frais de voyage et autres dépenses à l'occasion des bâtimens de Nancy," but these appear to be only out-of-pocket expenses.[3] He is said to have been created "conseilleur et contrôleur général" of woods and forests in 1750, ennobled in 1751, and created a Chevalier of the Order of S. Michael by Louis XV.

[1] Or "Palais du Gouvernement."

[2] "Notice sur la vie et les œuvres d'Emmanuel Héré de Corny," by M. P. Morey, 1863.

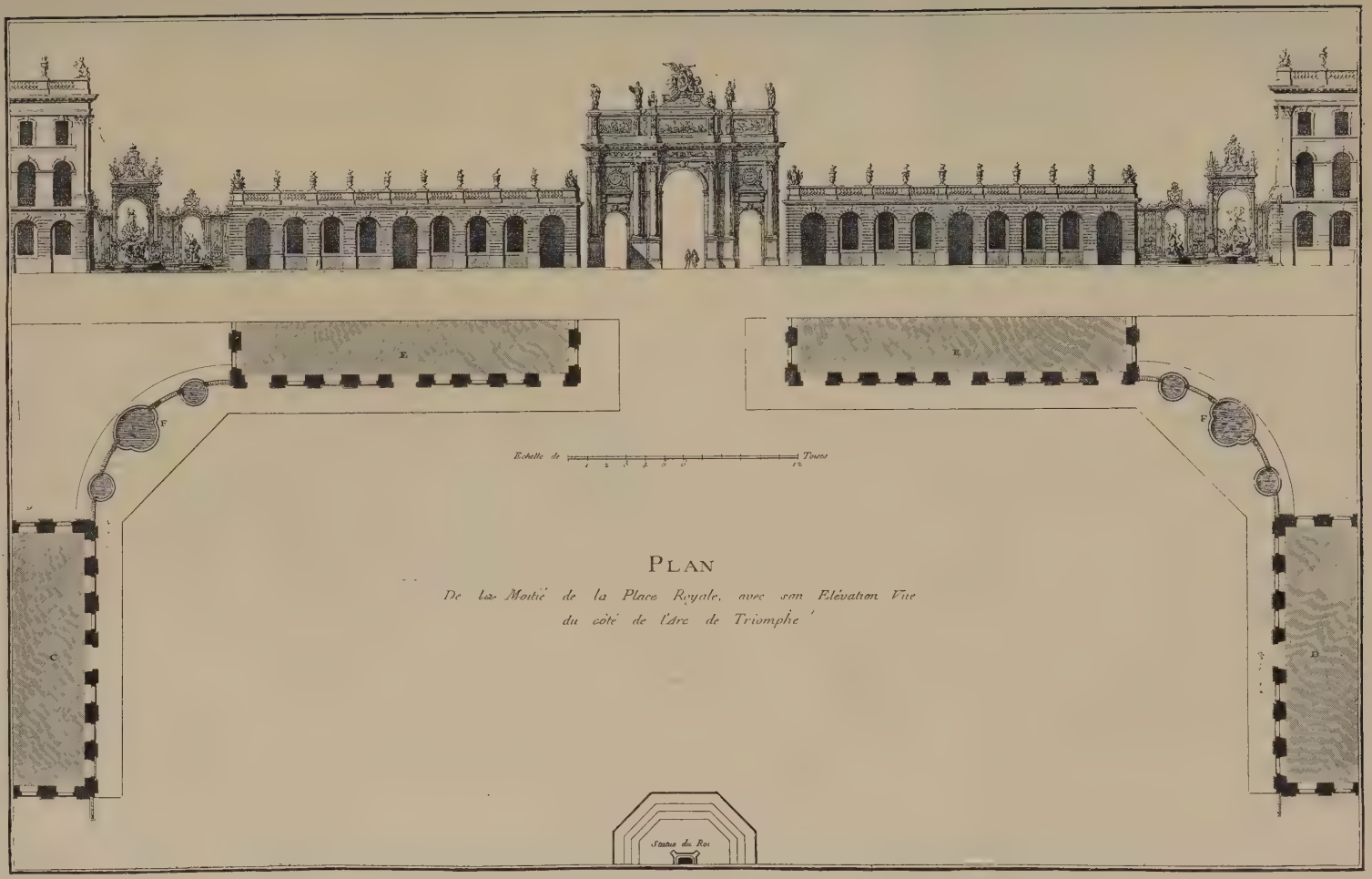
[3] There are twenty entries dating from March, 1752, to August, 1758.

With the exception of buildings at Chanteheux, Einville, and La Malgrange, since destroyed, and Châteaux at Lunéville and Commercy, converted into barracks, Héré did all his work in Nancy. He built the house of the Jesuits,[1] the church of the Bonsecours, and two at any rate of the gateways of Nancy, in addition to the Porte Royale (1751) between the Place Royale and the Carrière. The Porte Royale is spoilt by too much ornament, though it stands well in its place. The Porte Stanislas, with its Doric order, and boldly designed reliefs, is a finer design, though it seems rather meaningless, a mere screen detached from any building, and out of relation to those that are near it. Héré, by the way, had several models of gateways in Nancy itself, the strange Port de la Citadelle, the Porte S. Jeane, the Porte S. Nicolas, and the Porte S. Georges, all of them genuine gateways in the fortifications with double gates and guard houses of great strength.[2] Strange as they look now, their ponderous architecture would have justified itself when set in the ramparts of a fortified city. The problem before the eighteenth century architects was different. They were called upon to design triumphal arches, monuments in the grand manner, standing loose in the open. So far from answering any practical purpose, these arches were very much in the way. When erected in open spaces, where the architect was able to design the buildings leading up to them, as in the case of the Porte Royale, the design could justify itself on its merits, but when they were placed across streets of ordinary houses, the discrepancy of scale and complete incongruity of character becomes almost ridiculous. This, however, was not so much the fault of the architect as of the taste of the time, and the Porte Stanislas by Héré and the Porte Desilles[3] at the end of the Cours Leopold designed by an architect named Mélen, at Nancy in 1785, are fine examples of their kind, the latter in particular is one of the best of the French eighteenth century triumphal arches. Of smaller gateways the entrance from the Hemicycle to the Pepinière with its coupled Ionic columns and trophy of captives above the entablature is a perfect little masterpiece.

[1] The Seminaire des Missions Royales des Jésuites, built in 1739. The total cost, as stated in the Recueil, was 691,320 francs, 19 sous, 9 deniers.

[2] The Porte de la Citadelle, 1598, is the only one that preserves its original form. The Porte S. Jean was destroyed in 1868-74. The Porte S. Georges was very nearly destroyed about thirty years ago to make way for a tramline, but was saved by the efforts of the Commission of Historical Monuments.

[3] I can find nothing more about Mélen. Bauchal says that he designed the "porte de la Place de Grève" in 1782-84. There is no trace of this at Nancy.

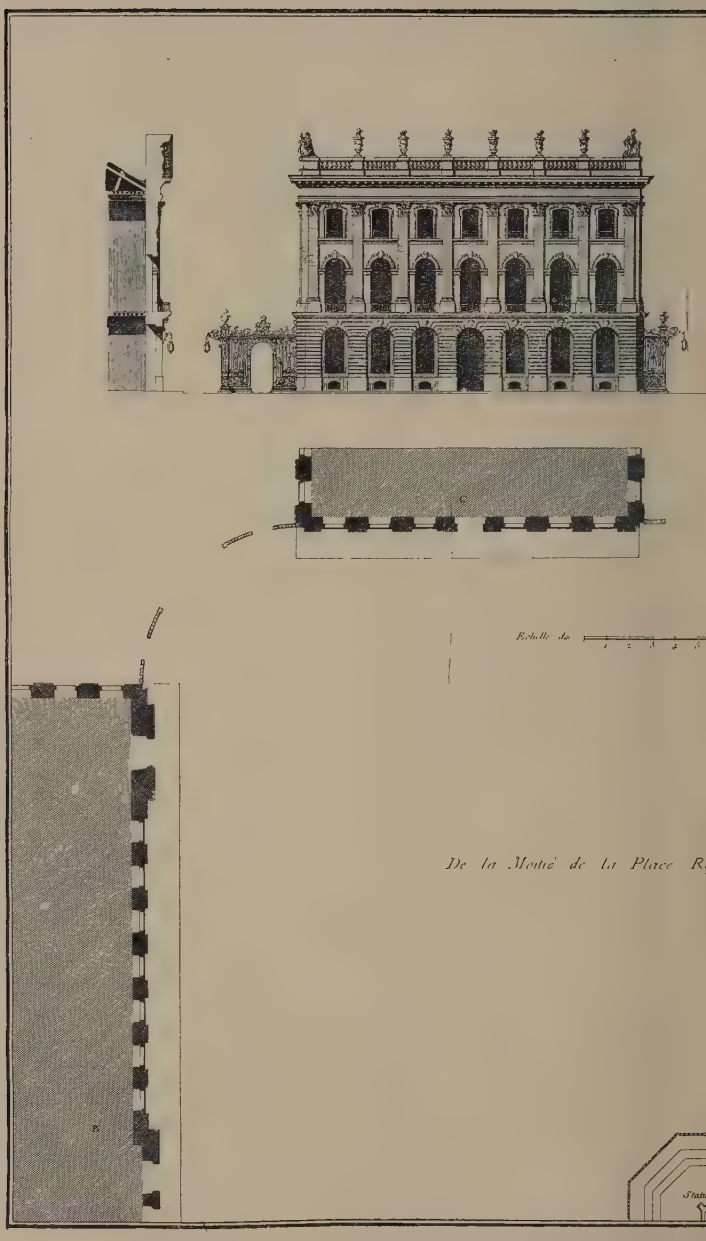


PLAN OF PLACE ROYALE, NANCY, SHOWING ARCHWAY TO LA CARRIÈRE. BY HÉRÉ (p. 118)

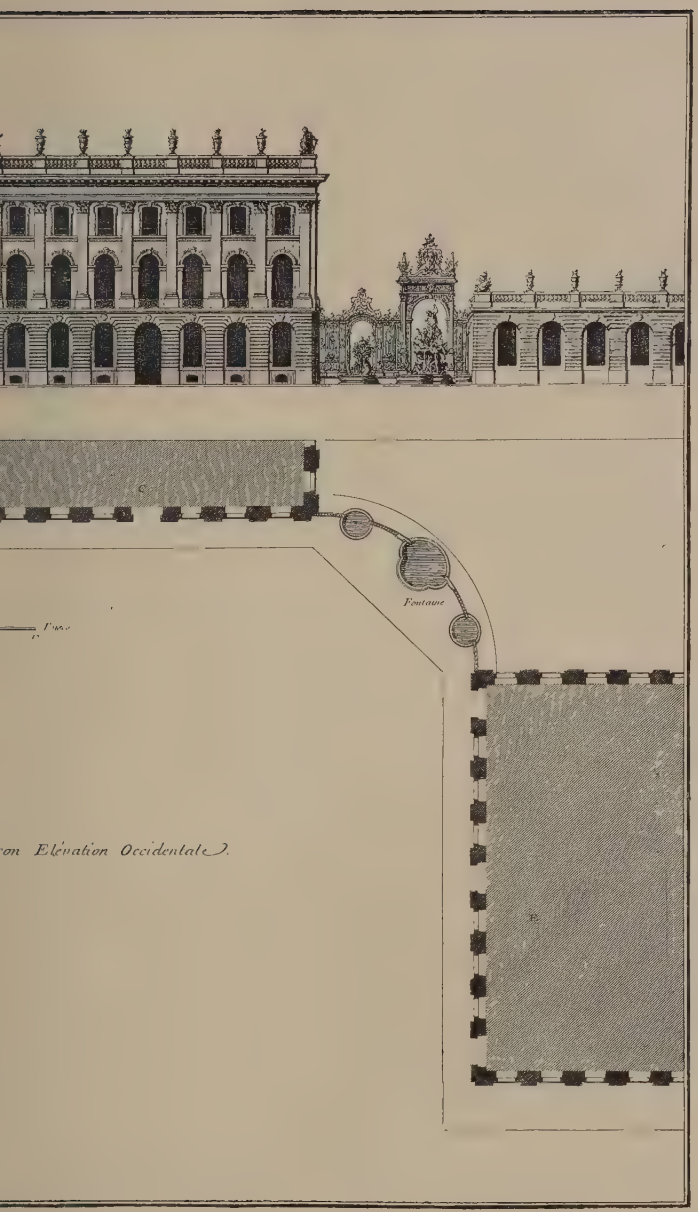
(FROM PATTE, "MONUMENS ÉRIGÉS," XXVI)

[Ill. TO FACE P. 118

PL. CLXVI

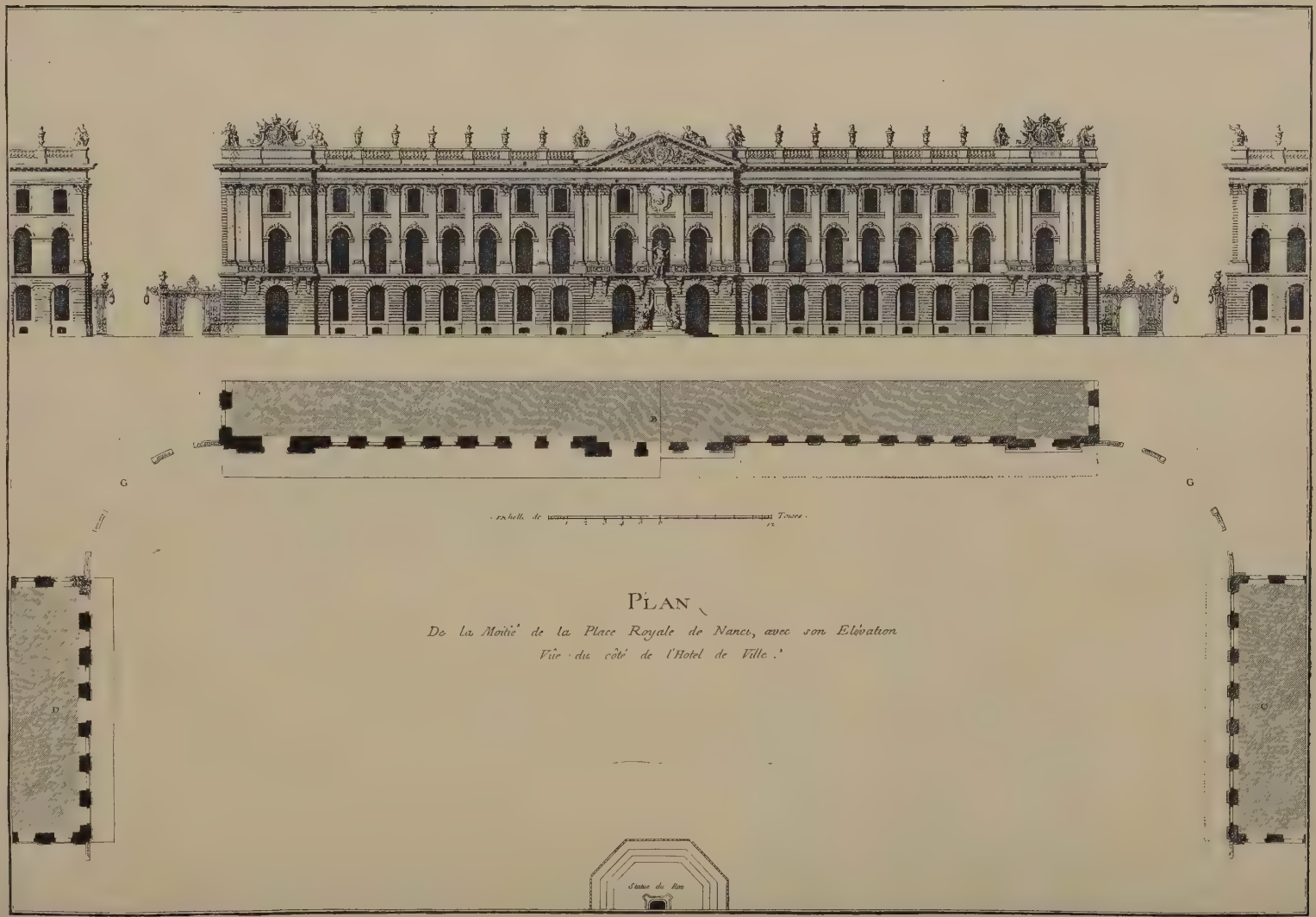


PLAN OF PLACE ROYALE ANI



[*Patte*, "*Mons. Erigés*"

VATION, NANCY. BY HÉRÉ


PLAN
De la Moitié de la Place Royale de Nancy, avec son Elévation
Vûe du côté de l'Hotel de Ville.
Echelle de Toises
Statue du Roy

[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

PLAN OF PLACE ROYALE AND ELEVATION OF HÔTEL DE VILLE, NANCY. BY HÉRÉ (see p. 117)

The Church of the Bonsecours at the extreme south end of the New Town was built from the designs of Héré in 1740, and in order to reduce the cost, the Château of La Malgrange was pulled down and the materials used for the Church. It is not an attractive building, good as it is in detail. The west front is a curious example of misplaced originality. It starts with a colossal composite order in three bays with engaged columns and without any recognition of the angles. Above this is a panelled attic storey, and above this the centre bay is carried up two more storeys to form a tower with a fussy little steeple. The effect is unstable. The west front of the church of S. Sebastian designed by an architect named Jennesson, and built in 1730 in the Place Marché, shows more grasp of architectural design.[1]

In actual fact very little is known of Héré himself. His memory lives in his masterly transformation of Nancy, just as that of the elder Wood will always be associated with Bath, but of his private life, of the sort of man that he was, and of his fortunes there is little record. We know nothing of his training, though it is evident from the work of such men as Jennesson that he need not have gone outside Nancy to find a competent master in the art. All that is known is that Héré was married to Marguerite Dufresnoy and was the father of sixteen children, and that in his latter years he started a factory for making starch out of horse-chestnuts, but the enterprise proved a failure. Héré went out of his mind and died at Lunéville in 1763 at the age of fifty-seven. It is perhaps inevitable that the artists of the capital of any great country should monopolize the reputations of their time. France has been peculiarly liable to this, and the career of a first-rate architect such as Héré in a town remote from Paris is of peculiar interest, inasmuch as it shows that the active life of the arts was by no means confined to Paris. The parallel case in England is, of course, Wood of Bath, but beautiful city as he made it, Wood had not the resources that were open to Héré, nor, it must be admitted, fine architect as he was, was he as able a man. Héré had his limitations; I have given an instance in the Church of Bonsecours, he was hardly on the same

[1] This church is a good example of early eighteenth century architecture. M. Hallays says, "L'ensemble de l'édifice seduit par son air d'élegance noble et aisée." Jean Nicholas Jennesson was architect to François III, Duke of Lorraine, and is first heard of early in the eighteenth century as carrying out the designs of the Cathedral (also attributed to Mansart and Boffrand) made by Ferdinand de Saint Urbain, architect and engraver. Bauchal says that in 1723 Jennesson was architect of the town of Nancy, and that in 1737 he was appointed architect and engineer to Stanislas. He seems to have been superseded by Héré, but he did a good deal of work at Nancy, where he died in 1755.

level as Ange Jacques Gabriel or Soufflot, for example, but he possessed the essential faculty of architecture, the power of conceiving of his problem as a whole, of never losing his way in a tangle of detail, and he holds a place of honour among the great French architects of the eighteenth century.[1]

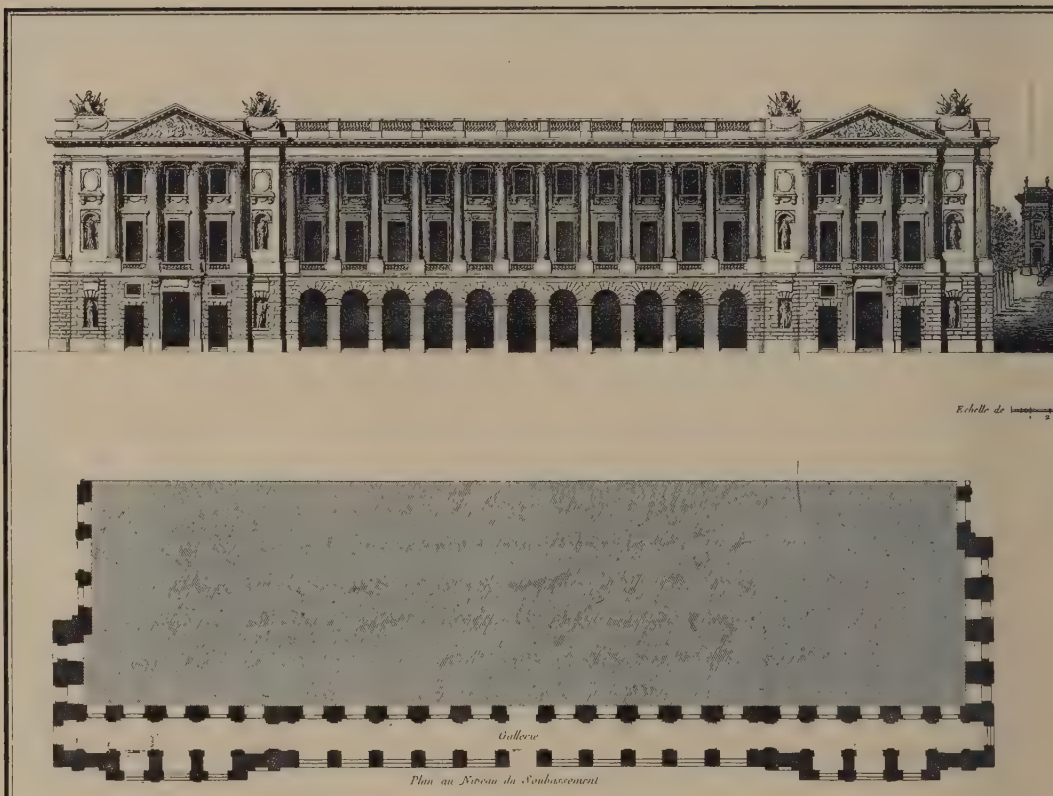
[1] His designs are shown in the great volumes published for Héré, the "Recueil des plans, élévations et coupes tant géometrales qu'en perspective des châteaux, jardins et dépendances que le Roy de Pologne occupe en Lorraine," 2 vols., Grand Atlas; and in another volume published in 1753, "Plans et élévations de la Place Royale de Nancy et d'autres édifices qui l'environnent, bâtis par les ordres du Roi de Pologne, duc de Lorraine. Dediés au Roi de France par Héré, premier architecte de Sa Majesté Polonaise." Jean Lamour's well-known "Récueil des ouvrages en serrurerie," etc. was published in 1767. See also the "Compte Général de la dépense des Edifices et Bâtiments que le roy de Pologne, Duc de Lorraine et Bar a fait construire pour l'embellissement de la ville depuis 1751 jusqu'en 1759," Lunéville, 1761. See also the folio of views of Nancy (A. Guerinet).

CORRECTION

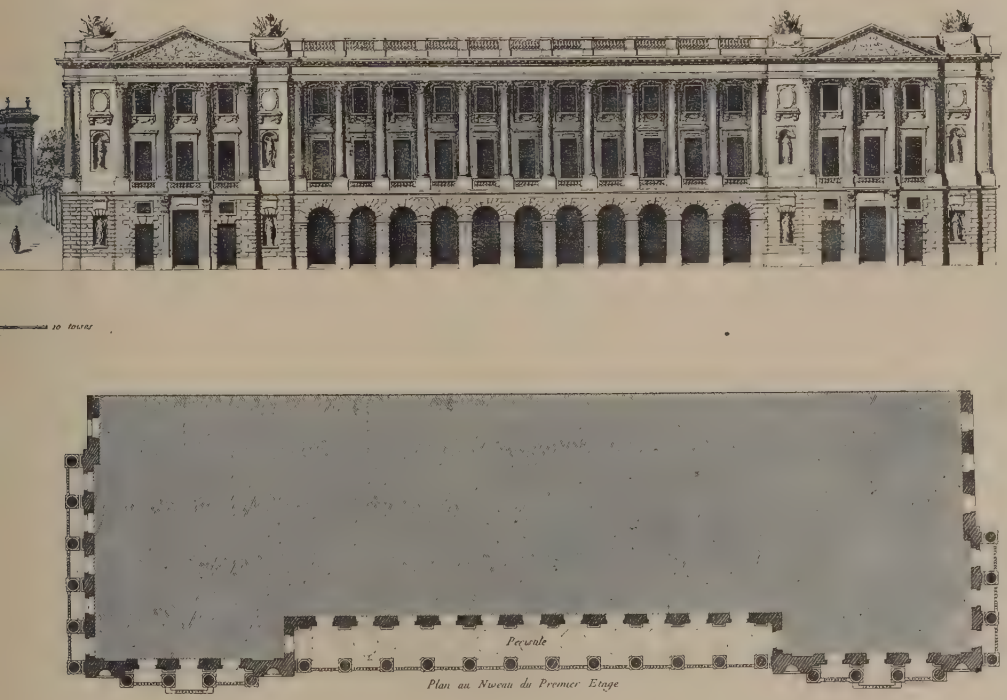
PL. CLXIX (vol. ii, p. 120)

For ART *read* WRT. [*i.e.* WROUGHT IRON-WORK].

ART IRON-WORK, PLACE DE LA CARRIÈRE, NANCY. BY LAMOUR
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

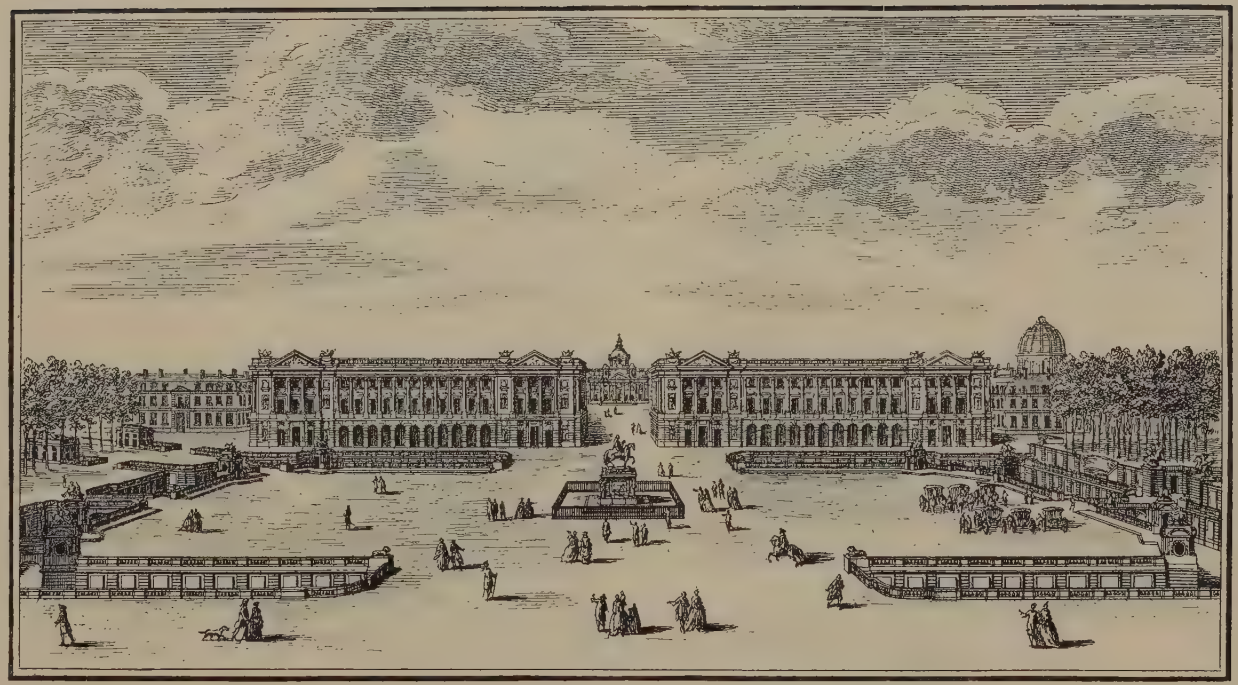


ELEVATION OF NORTH SIDE OF THE PLACE LOUIS XV (PLACE DE LA CO



Patte, "Mons. Erigés"

SHOWING THE MADELEINE BY CONTANT. BY A. J. GABRIEL (see p. 124)



[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

VIEW OF PLACE LOUIS XV (PLACE DE LA CONCORDE). BY ANGE JACQUES GABRIEL (see p. 125)

tr. TO FACE P. 121]

CHAPTER XXV

Ange Jacques Gabriel

ANGE JACQUES GABRIEL was, on the whole, the most distinguished French architect of the eighteenth century. It was not only that he was a very fine designer, his father, the architect of the Hôtel de Ville at Rennes and the Place de la Bourse at Bordeaux, was almost as good, but his art represents the culminating point of the tradition of French classic which started with De L'Orme, and was already setting to its end when Gabriel died in 1782. He was born in Paris in October 1698, and was the son of Jacques Gabriel and his second wife Elizabeth Besnier. The signatories to the marriage contract[1] were the Cardinal de Coislin, Jacques Nicolas Colbert, Archbishop of Rouen, the Duc de Beauvilliers, the Marechal de Lorges and his wife, Gilles de Juigné, and J. H. Mansart, some of the most considerable personages in French Society of the time. Thus the boy started with every advantage. His father, who was one of the two or three leading architects of the time, was ennobled in 1703,[2] no doubt through the influence of his all-powerful connection, J. H. Mansart, and he was very well off, not only through his salaries but also by inheritance from his father, the old contractor. It is the more remarkable that he never sent his son to Italy to complete his studies, and in point of fact it is not known how and where Ange Jacques Gabriel received his training. It may have been in the school

[1] "Ange Jacques Gabriel," by the Comte Edouard de Fels, to whose admirable monograph I am greatly indebted.

[2] "Ecuyer, Seigneur de Mézières, Bernay" and other places; the brevet of nobility says: "Considerant d'ailleurs que les ancêtres dudit Sieur Gabriel ont professé cet art avec distinction, notamment le Sieur François Mansart son grand oncle," quoted by the Comte de Fels. The insistence of J. H. Mansart on his relationship to the great François was the complement to his assiduous pursuit of titles for his family. He was, of course, ennobled himself and obtained patents of nobility for Gabriel, De Cotte, and even for Desjardins, "contrôleur des bâtiments," his nephew.

of the Academy of Architecture in Paris under De la Hire the younger, and Desgodetz; more probably he learnt his business in his father's office and was early associated with him in his work. In 1728 he married Catherine de la Motte, daughter of the first Secretary to the Duc d'Antin, who had succeeded Mansart as Director Général des Bâtiments. The importance of these influential connections to an architect at the outset of his career is obvious to anyone acquainted with the professional side of architecture. Young Gabriel stepped at once into a large and lucrative practice, and as his father had transferred to him the post of Contrôleur des Bâtiments on the occasion of his marriage in 1728, he already occupied a high official position at the age of thirty, and was admitted in the same year to the second class of the Academy, a rank corresponding pretty closely to that of an Associate of our Royal Academy. In 1734 when Jacques Gabriel succeeded De Cotte as "premier architecte," Ange Jacques became Controller at Versailles, to which post five years later was added that of Controller at Choisi, highly important appointments which brought the holder into close personal touch with the King. On the death of De Cotte in 1735 he succeeded to his place as an Academician of the first class. In 1741 he was appointed "architecte ordinaire du Roi," and in 1742 "premier architecte" in succession to his father. The King presented him with a site for a house at Versailles, and he already had a lodging for life in the Orangery of the Tuileries.

His first task was to wind up his father's work at Orléans and Bordeaux. After this for the next thirty years, till 1775, when he retired from practice, Ange Jacques Gabriel was almost exclusively engaged on the Royal Buildings. He was constantly called in to design alterations and additions, at Versailles, Marly, Choisi and Compiègne, for Louis XV was almost as fond of building as his grandfather. Then the royal ladies had to be attended to. Madame Adelaide wanted a place where she could store her snuff, Madame Victoire a screen to keep off the draught in the Chapel, and of course Madame du Pompadour, and afterwards Madame du Barry, were untiring in their demands. A good deal of the time of this great architect must have been taken up with work which might have been done equally well by any intelligent house-carpenter. Versailles was undoubtedly most inconvenient. Everything had been sacrificed to parade and ceremonial, and after the death of Louis XIV there was a strong reaction in favour not only of a more comfortable, but also of a more private and intimate manner of life. The King's suite of rooms

was much too small, and the problem of extension was solved by the remodelling of the rooms round the Cour des Cerfs, the total removal of the escalier des Ambassadeurs in 1752, and the conversion of the space into additional rooms. It is at this date that we first hear of the "grand projet" at Versailles, the scheme for the destruction of the Cour de Marbre, and the complete remodelling and refronting of the entrance side of the palace.[1] So far, however, the King contented himself with making his palaces more comfortable, and with building little private houses and pavilions for himself and his mistresses, such as the Hermitage at Fontainebleau for Mme. du Pompadour, now destroyed; the petit Château at Choisi, "pavillons de chasse" in the woods of S. Germain en Laye and Rambouillet, or the pavilion of Brimborion at the Château of Bellevue.[2]

Meanwhile, Gabriel had begun the Place Louis XV (Place de la Concorde), which remains one of his greatest achievements. After the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 the Provost and Échevins of Paris asked the King's permission to put up a monument to the King as "un témoignage du zèle de l'amour et de la reconnaissance de ses peuples." Bouchardon was to execute the monument, and the King was to select a site in Paris. A Grand Competition was held, and all the architects of the Academy were invited to enter.[3] Patte says that more than fifty projects were submitted, though the number of sites suggested were only about twenty, several artists having chosen the same site, and they varied between the Isle Saint Louis, La Place Dauphine, La Grève, the Halles, the space in front of the colonnade of the Louvre, le Carrousel, the esplanade of the Pont Tournant (at the end of the Tuileries Gardens), the Quai Malaquais, and other sites in Paris. "La plupart de ces projets étoient decorés de magnifiques colonnades, de cirques, de temples de la Victoire, de greniers publics, d'hôtel de ville, de salles de spectacle, de grenier à sel, d'hotel des Monnoies,

[1] It was not till twenty years later that this scheme was revised, and the work actually begun from Gabriel's designs.

[2] "C'est une petite maison charmante situé au bas du parc de Bellevue sur les Bords de la Seine" (Piganiol de la Force, ix, 45). The King used to stay here when visiting the works at Bellevue. The château of Bellevue was built from the designs of D'Isle and L'Assurance, the younger, 1748-50, under the immediate direction of Mme. du Pompadour, who according to Piganiol designed the gallery herself. Bellevue was sold to the King in 1757. It was destroyed at the Revolution.

[3] Patte ("Mons. érigés") says not only did the Academicians submit designs, but many other artists. The Academicians were specially invited by Normand de Tournehem, Director-Général des Bâtiments. For a detailed account of this competition see chapter xxix.

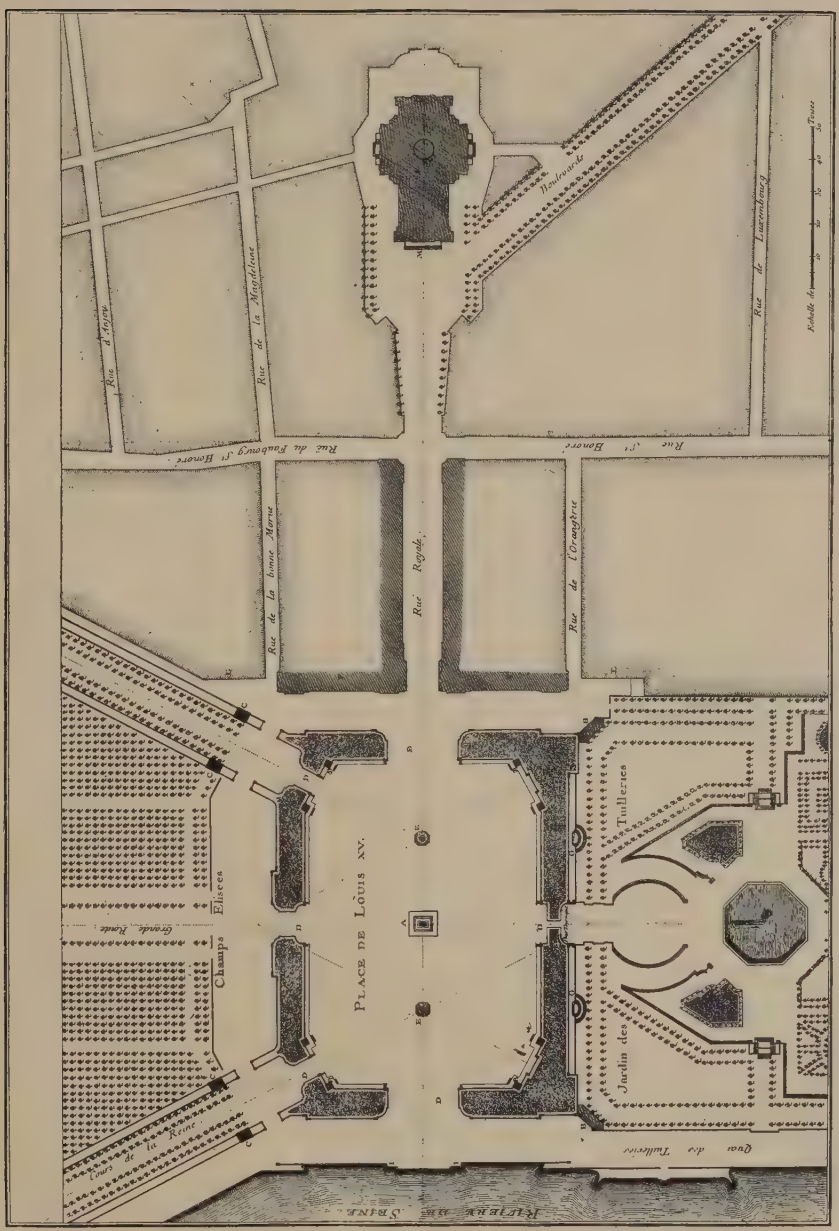
d'arcs de triomphe, de fontaines, d'églises, de Halles," etc.[1] Among the competitors whose designs Patte illustrates, were Soufflot, Boffrand, who sent in three projects, Aubri, Contant, Slotz, and Servandoni. All the designs in this first competition appear to have involved the destruction of existing property, and to solve the difficulty the King presented to the town a waste piece of ground lying between the end of the Tuileries Garden and the Champs Elysées. A fresh competition was held, and all the architects of the Academy, except eight, competed.[2] M. de Vandieres,[3] who had succeeded his uncle de Tournehem as Director General in 1751, reported unfavourably on all the projects. Gabriel's design, he said, was a fine design, but it destroyed the "bel accord" between the Tuileries and the Champs Elyseés. Boffrand's plan was that of a man "superieur dans l'art qui pense à tout et qui embrasse de grandes vues," but there were faults in it, and so with all the designs. According to the Director the site was impossible; he therefore proposed a scheme of his own, namely, to put the monument on a bridge, and, "voila, je crois la grande question décidée." In spite of this assurance, the King decided otherwise, and commanded Gabriel to make a "réunion" of all the best points in the plans of his competitors, and to carry out the work, an arbitrary proceeding, grossly unfair to the other competitors. The amended design was approved by the King in 1753 and the work begun at once. The problem was to design a great Place which should on the one hand serve as a setting for the King's monument, and on the other form a connecting link between the gardens of the Tuileries and the Champs Elysées. At that time the Champs Elysées were laid out as a formal plantation, with a central avenue following the axis line of the Tuileries Gardens, an avenue to the left, known as the Cours la Reine, parallel to the river, and a corresponding avenue to the right. Gabriel's solution was to treat the whole Place as an *avant-cour* to the Tuileries Gardens, but with openings 150 feet wide on the transverse axis line, giving on the north side a vista through the Rue Royale to the proposed Church of the Madeleine, and on the south side to the bridge, both of which had yet to be built. The central space forming the Place proper measured 750 feet by 522 feet from balustrade to balustrade;[4] beyond these

[1] Patte, "Mons. érigés," p. 188.

[2] The Academy at this date consisted of thirty-two members, sixteen in the first and sixteen in the second class.

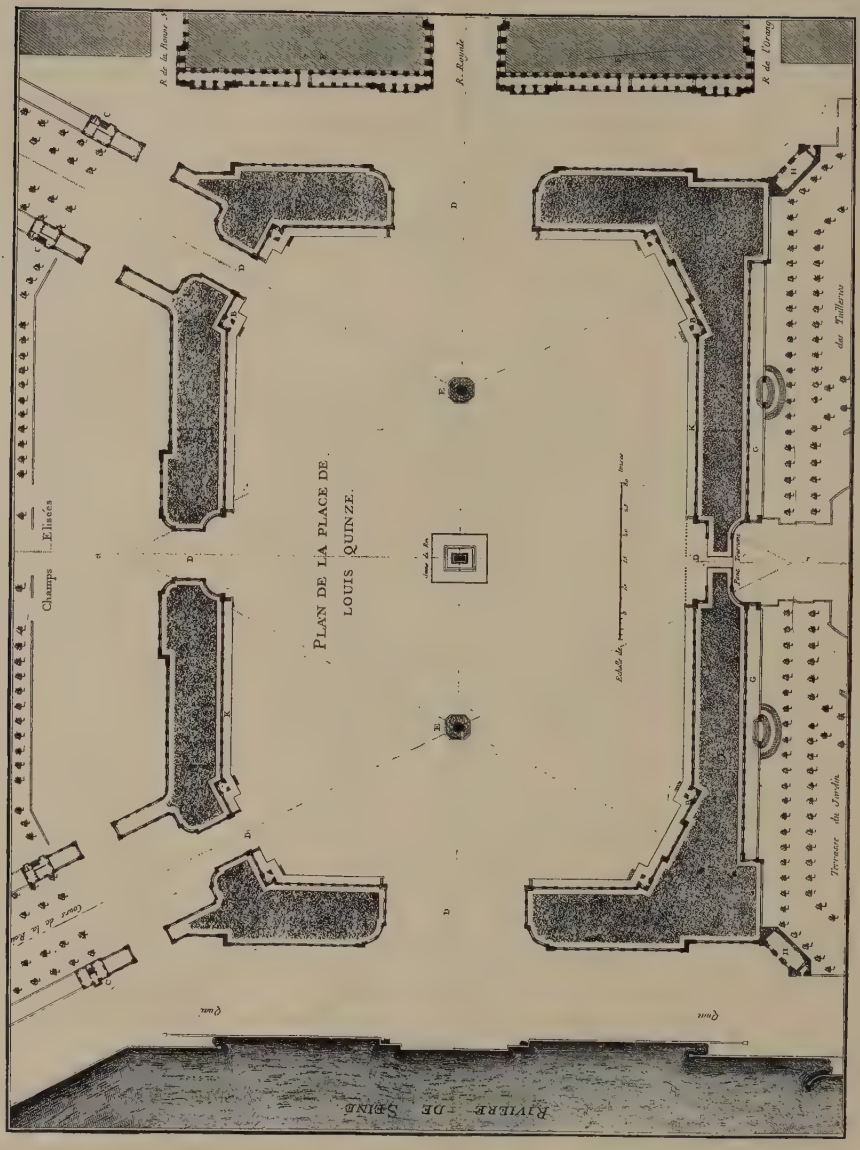
[3] Afterwards the Marquis de Marigny and brother of Mme. du Pompadour.

[4] Patte gives the dimensions as 125 toises by 87 toises wide between the balustrades.



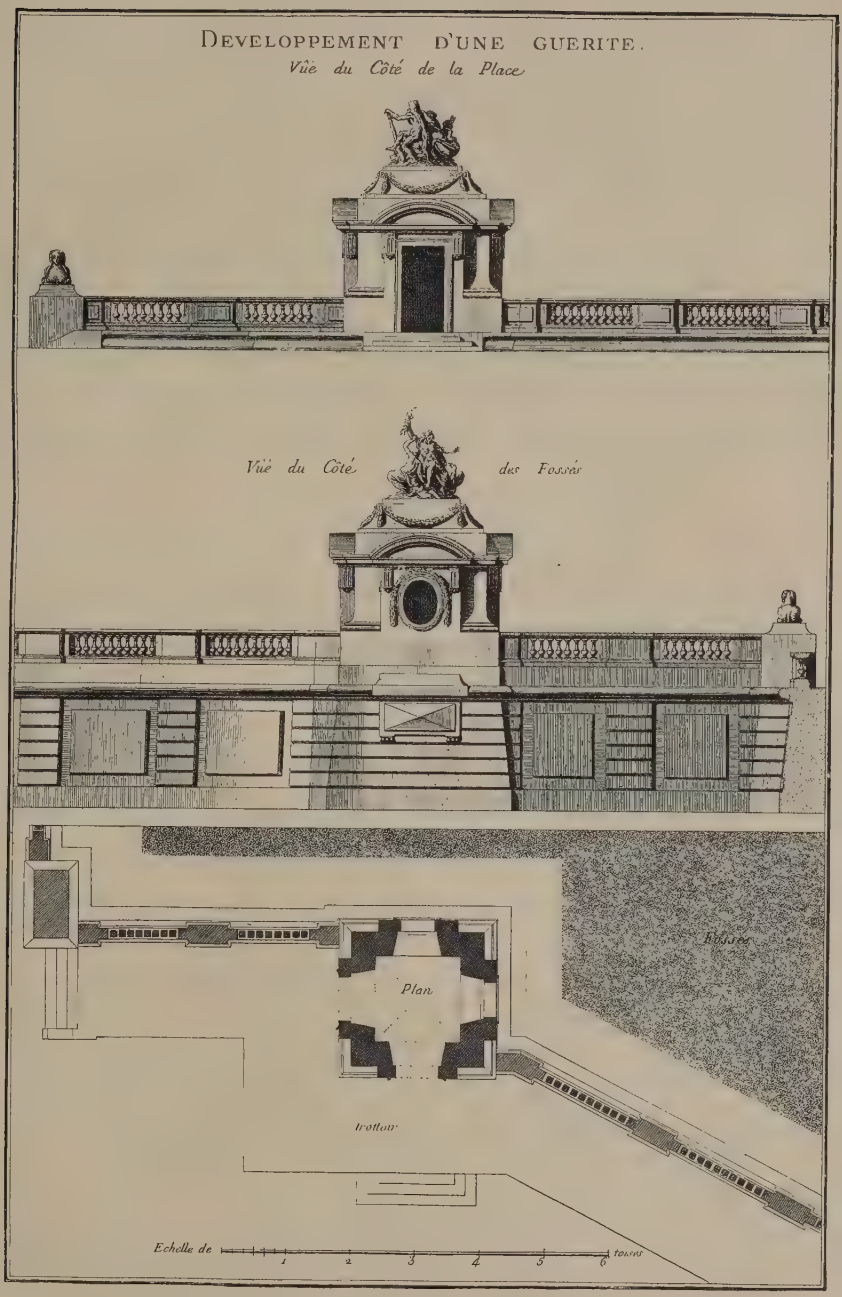
PLACE LOUIS XV. GENERAL PLAN, SHOWING GARDENS OF TUILERIES AND THE MADELEINE (p. 124)

[*Patte, "Monumens Erigés"*]



DETAIL PLAN OF THE PLACE DE LOUIS XV. BY A. J. GABRIEL

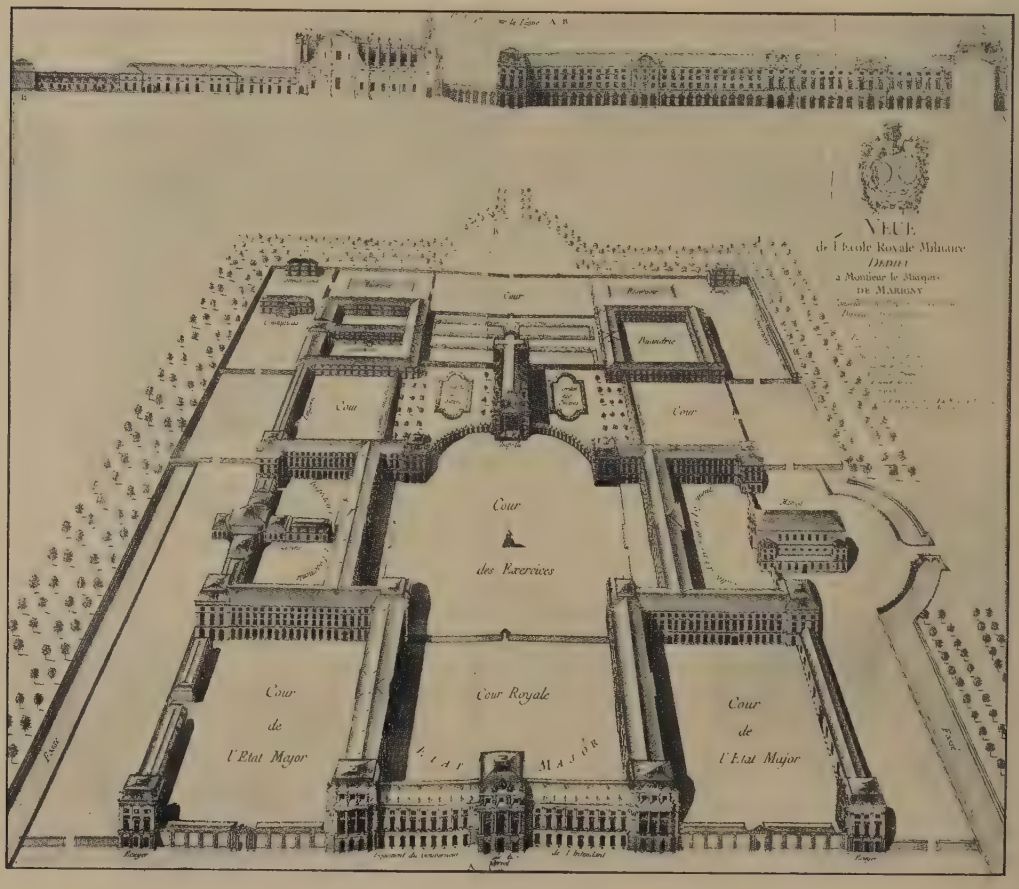
[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*]



[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

PLACE LOUIS XV. DETAILS OF GUERITES. BY A.J. GABRIEL

VIEW OF THE ÉCOLE MILITAIRE. FROM A WATER-COLOUR



THE ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS, AS FIRST DESIGNED BY A. J. GABRIEL (see pp. 126, 127)
(FROM "ANGE JACQUES GABRIEL" BY COMTE E. DE FELS)

balustrades were dry moats about 54 feet wide and 14 feet deep, the bottom covered with grass. The moats were enclosed on both sides by walls and balustrades, with canted angles at the four corners of the Place, bridges at the north-west and south-west angles, and pairs of "guérites"[1] or sentry houses marking the angles. Beyond, and on either side of the north-west and south-west avenues of the Champs Elysées were two-storey pavilions. Along the north side Gabriel designed the façades of the buildings extending from the Rue de la Bonne Morue to the Rue de L'Orangerie, with returns to the Rue Royale on a plainer design as far as its intersection with the Rue S. Honoré. These buildings were begun in 1757-58, but proceeded slowly, and in January 1768, Gabriel wrote, "Je travaille fort et ferme au coin de mon feu" at the designs for the Garde Meuble. It was a splendid scheme, far the finest thing of its kind yet done; indeed, it remains to this day unique in scale and boldness of conception. Unfortunately it has since been mutilated in almost every detail. The moats were filled up, the grille to the Cours la Reine and the pavilions removed, and in 1836 Hittorff put up the obelisk and the rostral columns, with a disregard of the original design little less than brutal.[2] In its present state the Place de la Concorde gives a wrong impression of the original design. It has lost the breadth of treatment, the nobleness, and simplicity which make French civil architecture of the middle of the eighteenth century so entirely satisfactory. In the Garde Meuble, Gabriel undoubtedly owed a something to Perrault's design of the colonnade of the Louvre, a design which had been too consistently ignored by Perrault's successors. Not only was the motive of the colonnade an original conception, it was also characteristically French, and Gabriel in adopting it and using it in his own way, was true to his instinctive feeling for the architecture of his own country. His vigorous mind rejected direct plagiarism from Italy, and was unaffected by the scoldings of the amateurs, whose pedantry was

I have taken the "toise" throughout as 6 feet. He gave the width of the moats as "onze à douze toises" 66 to 72 feet, but by scale they are from 9 to 11 toises wide.

[1] "Guérite c'est un petit Pavillon quarré ou d'autre figure ou se retire la sentinelle pendant le mauvais temps" (Daviler, "Explication des termes").

[2] The clumsy figures of the cities of France were placed on Gabriel's guérites at about the same time. Gabriel's idea had been to surmount the guérites with marble groups symbolical of the virtues "qui sont la base du gouvernement de Louis XV," and of the progress of the arts. These groups are shown in the water-colour drawing by Pérignon in the Cabinet des Estampes, which is reproduced in the Comte de Fels monograph, and they are also shown in Patte's engraving. Each group was to have its appropriate God, *e.g.*, Jupiter and Clemency, Mars and Justice.

to overpower French architecture at the end of the eighteenth century.

The École Royale Militaire, the second of the three works on which Gabriel's reputation rests, was suggested by Mme. du Pompadour and the financier, Paris Duverney. As the Invalides had been founded by Louis XIV as a haven for veteran soldiers, so the École Royale was to introduce the cadets to a military career. Paris Duverney drew up an able report on which Gabriel prepared a scheme on the scale of the Invalides, but when it came to the estimates, the cost was so immense that Duverney was frightened, and wrote to Gabriel, "Il s'agit moins d'élever un édifice à la gloire du Roi, que d'en former un qui soit utile à l'état." The favourite maxim of the reign of Louis XIV that the final cause of every enterprise was the glory of the King, had worn extremely thin. Duverney, a keen man of affairs, told Gabriel bluntly: "entre le beau et l'utile, il n'y a point à balancer, lorsque'on ne peut pas réunir les deux."[1] Gabriel had accordingly to reduce his scheme. Instead of surrounding the Cour Royale by lofty buildings on three sides, only the principal or centre block, and the end pavilions facing to the court were built, with one storey colonnades running out from the pavilions. The original idea had been to place the chapel as an independent building at the further end of the court, and on the main axis line connected by quadrant colonnades with the wings. This also was given up, and the chapel was built on a much less ambitious scale in one of the wings. It is, however, an admirable building, both in design and detail,[2] and, both here and on the grand staircase, Gabriel showed himself a master of classical design, sparing of ornament, yet selecting it with an unerring instinct for fitness, placing and spacing it with an assured knowledge which only one other architect, François Mansart, has ever approached. Gabriel possessed to an astonishing degree the sense of ponderation, the faculty of assigning the right weight of ornament to his architectural features, and this appears on a comparison of the École Militaire with the Invalides. Bruand had had good ideas, but came to pieces in expressing them. His trophies, instead of being impressive, are monstrous; throughout one feels he is saying either too much or too little. There is no such failure at the École Militaire.[3] The central pavilion is perhaps the best thing of its

[1] Quoted by the Comte de Fels, p. 75.

[2] It is now used as a military store.

[3] See "Monographie de L'École Militaire," Armand Guerinet, for full illustrations of this building.

kind ever done, the whole composition is so beautifully balanced, so completely in scale, so perfect an expression of its purpose. One can best realize how good it is by a comparison with the pavilions added to the Louvre under the third Napoleon,[1] bad in proportion, foolish in design, overloaded with ornament which stultifies itself by its own superabundance. The one fault in Gabriel's design is the conflict between the colossal Corinthian order of the central pavilion and the little orders of the galleries next them on the side to the court. This may have been forced on Gabriel as an afterthought; for the entablatures end up anyhow against the central and end pavilions. But the Doric order of the colonnade on either side of the court, and the beautiful pavilions which end them, go far to compensate for the discrepancy of scale between the two orders. As it is, the École Militaire is a compromise between the genius of Gabriel and official interference. Normand de Tournehem, the Director General, interposed in a very vexatious manner, and tried to insist that Gabriel should submit all drawings for his approval and signature. Gabriel withstood him stoutly, and replied in a firm and dignified letter, "l'autorité de l'architecte y est si reserrée qu'elle en est deshonorante." De Tournehem had to give way, but seems to have passed his quarrel on to his nephew Marigny, who throughout his career missed no opportunity of opposing Gabriel. The work was started in 1751, but the money ran out almost at once. In 1752 the contractors were not paid, but on the other hand were protected against the claims of their creditors. In 1755 Mme. du Pompadour intervened on behalf of her favourite scheme, and succeeded in getting some money out of the Controller General of Finances. By 1756 the works were sufficiently advanced to take in 200 cadets, but little seems to have been done in the next ten years, and the work was not seriously resumed till 1767 when the chapel was built, but the resources of the State were unequal to the demands for buildings here as well as at Versailles and Compiègne. Marigny reported that the Service des Bâtiments could not go on unless money was forthcoming. The royal houses were becoming ruinous, "tout les entrepreneurs sont aux abois, les ouvriers refusent le service." In 1771 Gabriel complained that the officials of the Service des Bâtiments had

[1] *E.g.*, the Pavillon Turgot, or the Pavillon Richelieu with the pediments in the wrong place and cutting into the cupola. Visconti, Lefuel, and the nineteenth century architects fell blindly into the mistake that Lemercier had made in the upper part of the Pavillon de l'Horloge. Gabriel was too good an architect to repeat the solecism of Lemercier.

not been paid their salaries for nineteen quarters, and had actually advanced money themselves to keep the Service going. The grand staircase of the École Militaire was not finished till 1773. Incomplete as it is, the École Militaire is one of the most perfect pieces of architecture in Paris, and, indeed in France, the last word of a magnificent tradition that it had taken some two hundred years to form, a tradition that, as the Comte de Fels very rightly says, ought never to have been abandoned, and ought even at this late hour to be resumed as the real line of development for modern French architecture.

I am not so much impressed with the Salle d'Opera at Versailles, clever design as it undoubtedly was, though it is only fair to say that the stuffy red of its existing decorations reverses the intention of the designer.[1] The Salle d'Opera was begun in 1748, but the façade was not finished till 1766, and the house was first used on the occasion of the marriage of the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette in 1770. In order to save money Gabriel used wood painted to imitate marble for his columns and wall surfaces, and attached so much importance to the decorations, that he got a committee appointed to settle the colour scheme, including Pajou the sculptor, Cochin the engraver, Soufflot, and De Wailly. The general scheme adopted was "une harmonie de vert clair et d'or avec des touches lumineuses de marbres gris et jaunes." In the Salle itself the cornices, architraves, caps and bases and the bas-reliefs by Pajou and Guibert, were gilt. The boxes were lit by candles set against lustres, and the hangings were in blue with silver fringes. In the Foyer, he played on "verd de mer, bleu turquoise," gold and "petit gris" for the plinth, the pilasters over were in "verd de mer," "jaune antique" was used for the plain surfaces, with medallions in white on a background of "petit gris." Gabriel's colour scheme is important because, with its cool suggestive harmonies it must have produced an effect the very opposite of the repulsive decoration substituted for it in the "restorations" of 1837, when Louis Philippe turned Versailles into a museum.

The "Grand projet" of Louis XV, to which I have already referred, came up again in 1771. The idea was nothing less than to do away with the Cour de Marbre, on the preservation of which Louis XIV had invariably insisted, to rebuild this court and re-face

[1] See "Ange Jacques Gabriel," the Comte E. de Fels, 92-97, for a complete description of the Opera house, taken from the "Mercure de France," August, 1770, and apparently approved by Gabriel and drafted in his office. A Salle d'Opera had already been built at Paris, 1762-67, from designs of Gabriel and Soufflot.

this side of the palace from the Cour de la Chapelle to the Cour des Princes. In 1771 Louis XV decided to carry out the scheme. Gabriel was delighted, and wrote to thank Marigny for having won a victory which would earn for him the gratitude of the public. There seems to have been this excuse for the work, that Mansart's building was showing signs of failure, and the walls were reported to be bulging; but the real reason seems to have been the King's passion for building, reinforced by the urgent pressure of Madame du Barry, anxious to prove that she, too, was not indifferent to the arts; she even advanced money to start the work. Gabriel's design provided for the removal of the Cour de Marbre, and its rebuilding on the altered and very much more extensive plan, with two internal courts for light and air. Fortunately the work was started at the east end of the north wing, and the Cour de Marbre was left untouched. By 1773 Gabriel's building was carried up to the top of the first floor windows, but at this point the workmen struck. Madame du Barry, who arrived on the scene, "pris avec beaucoup de chaleur le desordre de l'atelier," and protested that the contractor ought to be thrown into prison; but Gabriel, who remarked that this was "un peu fort," contented himself with dismissing the contractor, and handing over the work to another man. The wonder is that anybody was found to undertake work in any of the royal buildings at all. The contractors were never properly paid; and they must have sighed for the glorious days of *gaspillage* in the reign of Louis XIV, when contractors could make their fortunes and retire as country gentlemen. On the death of Louis XV in 1774 the works were stopped. Competitions for its completion were held under Louis XVI, and the first Napoleon.[1] The "Aile Gabriel" was finally completed in 1820, together with some extensive restorations by Fontaine, and the pavilion opposite that of Gabriel was carried out by Dufour.

A similar fate attended Gabriel's schemes for the completion of the Louvre and the rebuilding of the château of Compiègne; in both cases the designs were made and the work begun, but

[1] Napoleon's idea had been to pull down the entire château and rebuild it, and the architect (Gondouin) "fit un projet qui nécessitait 50 millions de dépense" (M. E. Cazes, "Le Château de Versailles," p. 158). This was too much even for Napoleon, who contented himself with some bad restorations carried out by Dufour in 1810-14. A competition seems to have been held for the re-building of Versailles. Fourteen schemes were made and they all involved the destruction of the existing building with the exception of the gallery and its two salons, the chapel, the opera and the grand apartments of the King and Queen. See Cazes, "Le Château de Versailles," pp. 158-59.

the King lost his interest in the work, no money was available, and the work was suspended indefinitely. The Louvre was in a scandalous state of neglect. The buildings to the north and south had never been completed and were not even covered in, the courtyard was occupied by the stables and coach-houses of noble lords, lodgings of artists of all sorts, and even by the débris of Perrault's building. The state of the Louvre was characteristic of the chaotic disorder that was gradually overwhelming France. In 1755 Gabriel, with Soufflot, made a determined effort to complete the building and clear the courtyard. The question arose whether Lescot's attic storey should be continued on the façades to the court, or whether the third order intended by Perrault should be built. Gabriel decided for the latter, and indeed had no choice, for nothing less than this would have screened the buildings already erected at the back of the colonnade. The works, however, were again suspended, and it was reserved for Percier and Fontaine to complete the old courtyard of the Louvre, and for the architects of the third Napoleon[1] to spoil the whole building by their fatuous additions. Compiègne, which had been a royal residence from time immemorial, was first attacked in 1736. In 1751 Gabriel prepared a scheme for the complete rebuilding of the Château on the existing site, but the work was not finished in 1775, when Gabriel retired, and was finally completed under the third Napoleon.

In one case only did Ange Jacques Gabriel succeed in carrying out his design in its integrity, and that is in the third of his famous buildings, the perfect little work of the Petit Trianon. As the Comte de Fels has pointed out, this is always associated with Marie Antoinette,[2] who loved the place and its garden, but in point of fact it was begun in 1763-4, and was built for Madame du Barry, who was only dispossessed of it on the death of Louis XV. The Petit Trianon is so well known and has so often been illustrated that there is no need to describe it.[3] It was one of the latest of Gabriel's works and, as it were, his last word summing up all the qualities of his design, his

[1] Visconti, Lefuel, and Duban.

[2] The boudoir of Marie Antoinette was designed by Mique, Gabriel's successor. The *jardin anglais* on the north and east sides, so dear to the Queen, was in fact a quite unsuitable setting for the house, and must have been most unwelcome to Gabriel, who adhered to the great traditions of French garden design, and had already shown the right setting for this house in his design of the formal garden on the west side.

[3] It is illustrated in complete detail in the "Petit Trianon" by James Arnott and John Wilson, architects, 1908. See also "Le Petit Trianon" by M. Desjardins.

instinct for proportion, his power of selection, the taste that could combine simple dignity with a free and cheerful fancy. M. de Fels says of the Petit Trianon that it marks the moment when Greek art came to purify the art of France, and that its design, free alike from the influence of Italy and of J. H. Mansart, is purely "Hellenic and French." I share M. de Fels' admiration, but not his critical appreciation. There is no trace in the Petit Trianon of that pedantic neo-Greek motive which was to render the architecture of the early part of the nineteenth century so particularly dull. To me, on the contrary, the Petit Trianon seems the expression of all the best and most characteristic qualities of pure French architecture, as fine in its way as Greek architecture, but its way is a very different way. The conditions under which Gabriel had to work, the ideals at which he aimed, were absolutely divergent from those of the architect of the Parthenon.

Gabriel retired from practice in 1775. He had lived a strenuous life, with a full measure of success and yet with many disappointments. Marigny, the Director-General, backed by his all-powerful sister, Madame du Pompadour, was his constant enemy. He tried unsuccessfully to defeat Gabriel's scheme for the Place Louis XV, and matters came to a head in 1767 over the election of De Wailly to the Academy. Marigny put forward De Wailly as a candidate, but the Academy, under the influence of Gabriel, rejected him. The King, thereupon, sent a *lettre-de-cachet* to the Academy, ordering them to elect De Wailly at once into the first class of Academicians, an unconstitutional proceeding, as only members of the second class were eligible as Academicians, and Gabriel, with a good deal of courage, resisted the King's decree. Meanwhile, Marigny had been taking the waters at Spa, but on his return to Paris, he at once laid the whole affair before the Privy Council, with the result that the Academy of Architecture was suppressed, and all the members received *lettres-de-cachet*, forbidding them to assemble or to use the title of "Architecte du Roi." Gabriel finally succeeded in securing a compromise. De Wailly was made an Academician of the first class on the express understanding that his election was not to be taken as a precedent. On another occasion, when a dispute had arisen between Potain, Gabriel's chief draughtsman, and a young architect named Dupuis, Gabriel acted as chairman of the committee appointed by the Academy to investigate the matter, and decided in favour of Potain. Marigny was furious, and accused Gabriel of partiality in terms reminiscent of Cicero's indict-

ment of Catiline, "abuserez vous toujours aussi de votre place."[1] Marigny, who retired, or was superseded on the death of Louis XV, died in 1781, and in the year following died: "M. Ange Jacques Gabriel, Ecuyer, Conseiller du Roy, ancien Contrôleur Général des bâtiments, jardins, arts et manufactures de Sa Majesté, ancien inspecteur général des bâtiments du Roy, son premier architecte, honoraire Directeur de l'Académie d'Architecture, honoraire amateur de celle de peinture et de sculpture, et maître de la garde-robe de Madame." There is a bust of Gabriel by J. B. Lemoyne in the free, swaggering manner of that able sculptor. The head has a high, rather narrow forehead, tapering upwards, and a heavy jowl and double chin, which reminds one of the bust of J. H. Mansart by the elder Lemoyne.[2] The impression it gives is that of a man full of energy, imperious and masterful, an impression borne out by the little that is known of Gabriel's life. That he was a great artist is shown by his works, and the rare glimpses that one gets of his life suggest that his was a fine, upstanding personality, a strong man who went his own way, undeterred by menace or intrigue, loyal to his friends, and just to his subordinates. Ange Jacques Gabriel was the last of the old guard in French architecture. A generation had already risen that abjured the living faith of its fathers, and thought that it had found salvation in the graveyards of the past. It was this younger generation that weakly handed over the custody of architecture to pedants and moralists, and so started that fatal divorce between the art and the actual conditions of life which has brought about the downfall of architecture by converting it into a trick and the plaything of fashion.

[1] "Quousque tandem Catilina abuteris nostra patientia."

[2] J. Louis Lemoyne (1665-1755).

CHAPTER XXVI

Soufflot and Contant D'Ivry

GABRIEL was the last undeviating adherent of the national tradition of French architecture. There is no record of his having visited Italy, and he was unaffected by the ambition of the younger generation to recreate French architecture on the lines laid down by the amateurs and the archaeologists. Soufflot, the greatest of his contemporaries, began his training in Italy, and visited it again under remarkable conditions in the middle of the eighteenth century, and his work shows a gradual transition from the true French manner to the neo-antique, so dear to the heart of the Comte de Caylus, of Winckelmann and, a little later, of Quatremère de Quincy. In his earlier work he adhered to the French tradition, but his travels in Italy, and the influence of the enthusiasts who were revealing to the world the architecture of Magna Gracia, altered his orientation. He was drawn into the vortex of archaeology, and in his greatest work, S. Geneviève or the Panthéon, he went right away from the accepted traditions of church design. Indeed, in his efforts to reconcile the thrust of a central dome with the columnar treatment of an ancient temple he narrowly escaped the collapse of the whole building.

Jacques Germain Soufflot was born at Irancy, near Auxerre, on 22 July 1713. He was the son of a prosperous tradesman, who became "Lieutenant au Bailliage" of Irancy. De Quincy says that the details of his education are unknown, but that his father sent him to Rome, and here, on the recommendation of the Duc de S. Aignan, Ambassador at Rome, he was admitted as a pensionary in the French Academy. In a list sent by Wleughels, the Director, to D'Antin early in 1735, Soufflot is mentioned as having entered the school in December 1734,[1]

[1] "Corres. des Directeurs," ix, 145, 264-338.

and Wleughels reported, "Soufflot, tout jeune qu'il est, a beaucoup de mérite en architecture, et il y a lieu de croire qu'il ne fera pas deshonneur à l'Académie." In 1736 Wleughels again reported: "Nous avons dans l'Académie un jeune architecte nommé Soufflot qui achève avec soin un grand dessein qui est bien." In March 1738, Orry, the Director-General, wrote to Lestache at Rome, assenting to the return of Soufflot, and to the payment to him of "200 liv. qu'on accorde ordinairement aux pensionnaries pour les frais de leur voyage." On his return from Rome, Soufflot stopped at Lyons,[1] and designed a dome for the Church of the Chartreux. He was again at Lyons in 1745, when he designed the "Loge de Change," and the Hôtel Dieu with its splendid cupola and fine façade on the quay overlooking the Rhône.[2] The Chapel of the Hôtel Dieu, was planned with openings into four halls, from which patients could follow the services. It would appear from this that the cupola of the Chartreux, with its attractive lantern, was an early work, picturesque and fanciful, without any affectation of austere classic. The Hôtel Dieu was more ambitious. The façade is treated very simply, and with a fine sense of scale and proportion in its planes and adjustment of masses. It is an interesting piece of architecture, and the great square dome that rises over the centre is almost as fine as the central pavilion of the École Militaire. It is surmounted by a square balcony with an iron balustrade, and above are three amorini supporting a globe with a cross over it. The early maturity of some of these famous French architects was astonishing. I have already noted it in the case of J. H. Mansart, the younger Gabriel, and others, and Soufflot must have made this able design "pour un des plus beaux édifices[3] qui aient été élevés de ce siècle," at an age (probably not much over thirty) when most modern young architects are struggling to find their feet; but architects in the first half of the eighteenth century had behind them a great tradition, and the advantage of having been trained in a definite school of design. Though I cannot find that it has been attributed to Soufflot, it is possible that he

[1] D'Argenville, "Vies des fameux Architectes," i, 475, says that the town of Lyons consulted the Director of the Academy at Rome as to the appointment of an architect, and that it was on the Director's nomination that Soufflot was appointed.

[2] Quatremère de Quincy, "Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvrages des plus célébres Architectes," says the façade of the Hospital measures 167 fathoms (about 1,000 feet long). I paced it and made it about 240 yards, exclusive of the wings, which would add another 60 yards or so. D'Argenville says that the design of the cupola was altered by the local authorities in 1758 without consulting Soufflot.

[3] Patte, "Mons. érigés," p. 5.

designed the fine Hôtel Dieu that stands outside Bourg on the left of the road to the Church of Brou, an excellent example of what may be done by a good man with the simplest possible means.[1] The centre of the façade of this building projects some eleven feet with a plain pediment, above which rises the drum of a circular dome; to right and left a plain three-storey building in seven bays connects with the end pavilions, and the only features allowed himself by the designer are important doorways, some 18 feet by 9 feet wide in the centre, and in the centre of the curtain façades. The effect is got by well-considered spacing proportion and selection.[2]

In 1749 Soufflot was admitted to the Academy on the obvious merit of the work that he had done at Lyons and its neighbourhood, and in the following year he was invited to accompany Abel François Poisson, Marquis de Vandières[3] (afterwards Marquis de Marigny) on his journey to Italy.

Vandières, brother of Madame du Pompadour, a capable, masterful, and arrogant man, had already his eye on the succession to the Surintendance des Bâtiments then held by his kinsman Lenormant de Tournehem, and since the days of Colbert, with the notable exception of J. H. Mansart, the Italian tour had been an almost indispensable qualification for the office. Vandières himself took the intelligent interest in the arts usual in French society in the eighteenth century, and no doubt learnt a good deal from his companions, "his eyes," as he called them—Soufflot, Nicolas Cochin (a shrewd and accomplished artist), and the Abbé Le Blanc. Cochin wrote the record of the tour.[4] He found little to admire in the newly discovered paintings on the walls of Herculaneum and Pompeii (1748), but was impressed by the sculpture and architecture. The travellers found themselves in the midst of all the excitement and enthusiasm aroused by these discoveries. Piranesi had begun to publish his engravings in 1741, and in 1748 he brought out his series of Roman antiquities and triumphal arches. The rage for the antique, then all the fashion in Rome, made a lasting impression on

[1] I find that in vol. ii, p. 27, of my "History of French Architecture, 1499-1661," owing to a printer's error the word "eighteenth" was omitted before "century."

[2] The approximate dimensions of the façade are: centre, 16 paces; intermediate, 31 paces; end pavilions, 15 paces; total length about 325 feet.

[3] Created Marquis de Marigny, by which name he is generally known in 1755 and Marquis de Menars in 1764. He was Surintendant des Bâtiments 1754-1774, and died 1781.

[4] "Voyage d'Italie, ou Recueil de notes sur les ouvrages de Peinture et Sculpture" (Ch. Nicholas Cochin, Paris, 1751).

Soufflot, and through him on Marigny himself, and the marked bias of the latter in favour of Soufflot and against Gabriel had its origin in this Italian tour. It must also be admitted that in this way Marigny seems to have acquired a grasp of civil architecture, not usually found in modern ministries of fine art. To Soufflot, of course, the friendship of such a powerful person as the brother of Madame de Pompadour must have been of great professional advantage. Together they visited Paestum, where Soufflot made measured drawings of three of the temples,[1] but his health broke down, and he returned to France soon after 1750. He again stopped at Lyons and was employed to design a new theatre for the town (built in 1754-56). It was to hold 2,000 people and Soufflot designed it on an elliptical plan. Quatremère de Quincy[2] in his arid way says, "La composition générale n'offrit rien d'inutile, et satisfit à tout le nécessaire." Soufflot appears to have returned to Paris in time to take part in the second great competition of 1752 for the Place Louis XV. Marigny did his best to get him the work, but the design of A. J. Gabriel was selected, and Soufflot had to content himself with the post of Controller of the Works at Marly, to which he was appointed in 1753 in succession to L'Assurance the younger, and Contrôleur Général of the royal buildings in Paris.[3] Soufflot's design for the placing of Bouchardon's monument of Louis XV was in some ways the best sent in. He proposed to fill up the space between the Isle de la Cité and the Isle S. Louis, and to form a large Place, with the north and south sides open to the river and flanked on east and west sides by imposing buildings, with the monument in the centre on the axis line of the main street running the whole length of the Island. Soufflot's scheme would have been a great improvement to this part of Paris. He does not, however, appear to have paid very much attention to vistas and the architectural linking up of important monuments, and Patte, though he describes the scheme with approval, did not think it worth while to illustrate it in detail. In 1757 he was made a Chevalier of the Order of St. Michael, and in that year produced his designs for the church of S. Geneviéve, or the Panthéon, as it was called after his death. His fame as an

[1] He published these in 1764, "Suite de plans, Coupes, etc., de trois temples Antiques tels qu'ils existaient en Pestum en 1750." Paris, 1764.

[2] De Quincy gives the date as 1754, but it was probably designed earlier. The theatre was rebuilt in 1826.

[3] He is described by Patte as "Contrôleur Général des Bâtiments du Roi à Paris." Bauchal describes him loosely as "Contrôleur des Monuments de Paris."

architect rests mainly on his design for this building, but the execution of it nearly shattered his reputation at the time, and certainly shortened his life.

The old church of S. Geneviève had long been ruinous, and during his illness at Metz, when he very nearly died, Louis XV made a vow to rebuild the church if he recovered. Apparently a competition was held, and this time Marigny's influence prevailed. Quatremère de Quincy says that several architects submitted designs, but that of Soufflot was selected. His plan provided a Greek Cross, 340 feet long, including the enormous frontispiece of the west front.[1] The width is 250 feet out to out. The dome is 62 feet 8 inches in diameter, and the total height, inclusive of the lantern above the cupola, 340 feet. Soufflot was determined to produce something entirely original. He made no attempt to follow the French tradition.

The church of the Invalides, the last great effort in church building in France, and with all its faults an admirable work, left Soufflot unmoved. He had done the Italian tour, he himself had drawn and measured the temples of Paestum, and felt the glamour of the Pantheon in Rome, and the connoisseurs were already deep in the bondage of archaeology, impatient of the beautiful art of their own country, intent on showing their virtuosity by revivalisms of the antique. Soufflot tried the impossible task of combining the dome with the lintol and column. D'Argenville puts it, "Il étoit reservé a Soufflot d'adopter à nos édifices sacrés la noble décoration de l'antiquité payenne."[2] He provided triangular piers to carry the drum of his dome, and, according to D'Argenville, 132 Corinthian columns,[3] 4 feet in diameter and 10 feet apart, to carry the entablatures of the interior. In the frontispiece he resolved to break the record, and designed a gigantic portico in five bays on the front with columns of the Corinthian order, some 6 feet in diameter and 60 feet high.[4] The total width of the frieze out to out, as shown in de Quincy, is about 108 feet. French writers have claimed that this was the first example of a single order the full height of the church,[5] but Inigo Jones had done it in a rudimentary way in

[1] De Quincy, rather strangely for an archaeologist of his pretensions, calls this a "peristyle." The dimensions given in the text are those given by de Quincy, "Histoire," etc., ii, 344.

[2] "Vies," i, 477.

[3] In this number D'Argenville includes engaged as well as isolated columns.

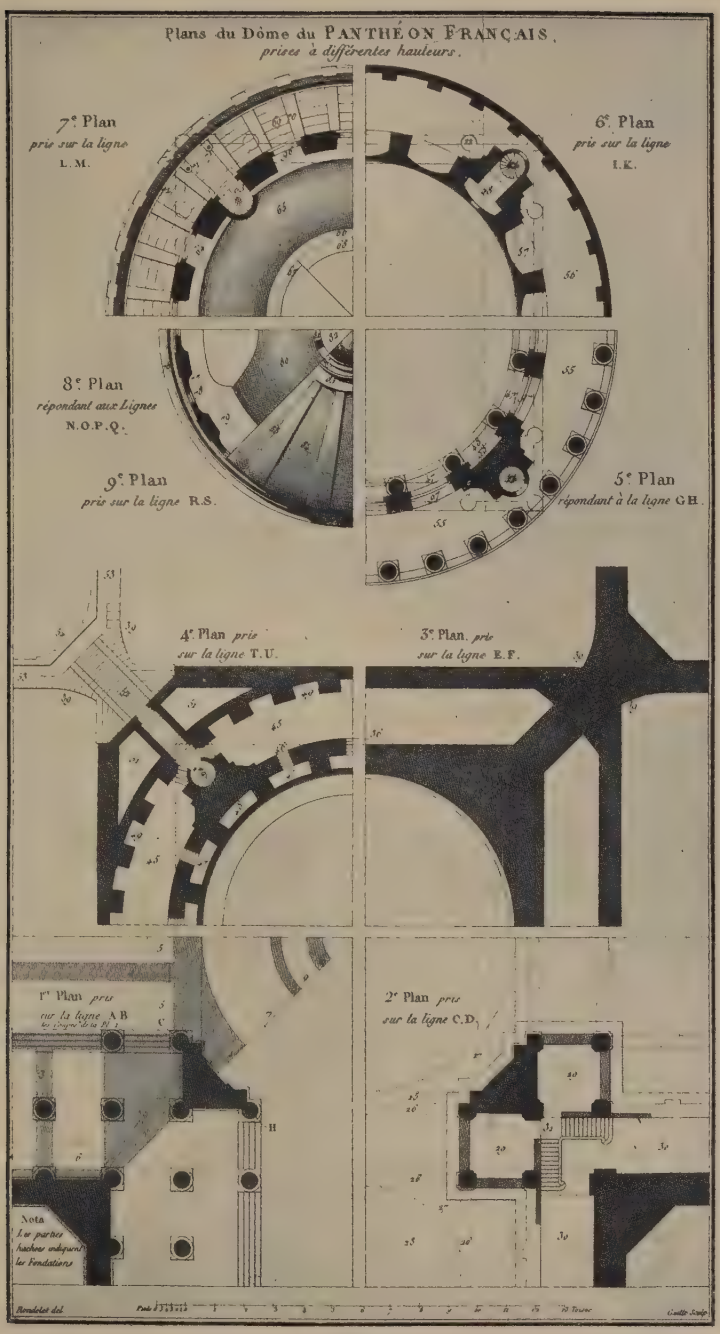
[4] The height of the Corinthian order of the frontispiece of the Pantheon in Rome is given by Desgodetz as 45 feet. It is in seven bays, and the width of the frieze out to out is 102 feet; the diameters of the columns vary from 4 ft. 6 in. to 4 ft. 8½ in.

[5] "Nouv. Biog. Générale," *s.v.* Soufflot.

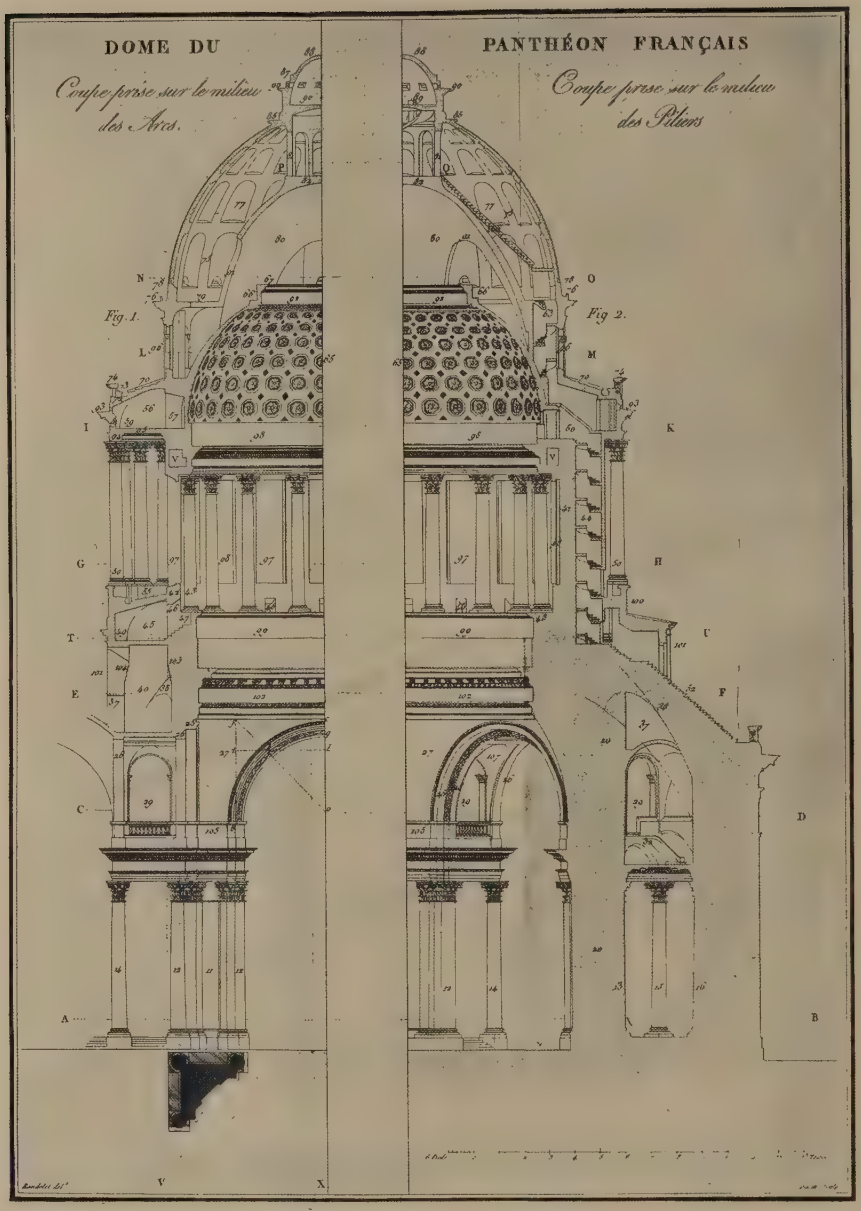
Covent Garden; Wren had tried for a single order on a lofty stylobate in his rejected design for S. Paul's; and Gibbs had succeeded in carrying out this treatment with the full paraphernalia of the order in the portico of S. Martin's-in-the-Fields.[1] So far as size was concerned, Soufflot certainly beat the record, but he over-reached himself, for the frontispiece overpowers the church, and the dome, fine as it is, is unequal to its scale. Indeed, it was in the design of the dome that Soufflot failed. Its scale is inadequate not only to the frontispiece, but also to the exaggerated massiveness of the exterior of the substructure. But there were more serious defects than this in the design of the actual construction. After seven years had been spent in forming the foundations, the first stone was laid in 1764. In 1770 Patte and others pointed out that the piers supporting the drum of the dome were not strong enough for their purpose. Rondelet, who was then a pupil of Soufflot, and who afterwards completed the building, replied anonymously to Patte,[2] and M. Ganthey, of the Ponts et Chaussées, and M. L'Abbé Bossut of the Académie des Sciences, pulverized (D'Argenville's term) the critics with scientific demonstrations. Soufflot assured his opponents that his calculations were scientifically correct, as they would see in good time, and declined to alter his design. Unfortunately serious cracks began to show on the face of the piers in 1796, and though Rondelet loyally defended his old master, saying that the cracks were due to wrong setting by the masons, he increased the areas of the piers by casing in the columns mounted by Soufflot, and probably by so doing saved the building from complete catastrophe. The vexations caused by the persistent criticism of his design, the disloyalty of his friends, and the anxiety which the architect must have felt as to the soundness of his construction, undermined his health, and he died of worry and chagrin in 1780. The Panthéon was undoubtedly a great work, very fine in parts, but, on the whole, it was not a success. Soufflot's invention was spoilt by his Italian tour; Paestum and the connoisseurs were too much for him. He lost the graceful fancy of his earlier years, the true national manner of French architecture, and yet that manner was too ingrained in him to allow him wholly to assimilate the archaeological classic then becoming the rage, and vehemently advocated by the pedants. The frontispiece is a reminiscence of the

[1] The height of his order is 34 feet, and the width of frieze, out to out, 62 feet.

[2] "Doutes d'un marguillier sur le problème de M. Patte concernant la Coupole de Ste. Geneviève," 1770, and "Mémoire en réponse à M. Patte," 1772. See Appendix on the Dome of the Panthéon.



PLANS OF THE DOME OF THE PANTHÉON, AS DESIGNED BY SOUFFLOT
(FROM J. B. RONDELET, "MÉMOIRE SUR LE DÔME DU PANTHÉON FRANÇAIS")



SECTIONS OF DOME OF THE PANTHÉON

(FROM RONDELET)

(The plan in left-hand corner shows casing of pier on outer sides by Rondelet)

Pantheon of Agrippa, but the dome and its drum are a version of Wren's design for S. Paul's, missing all the nuances that give the latter its inimitable distinction. The omission of the four salients on the re-entering angle, and of the blocking of every fourth intercolumniation, which were vital elements in Wren's design, is fatal to the effect of the Panthéon. Quatrémère de Quincy, who became exceedingly active and officious at the French Revolution as the protagonist of this neo-classic, considered the Panthéon the greatest monument of the eighteenth century, and he commends Soufflot on the ground that he "rémit en honneur le style de l'antiquité au moins pour la grandeur de la conception, pour l'emploi des colonnes isolées,[1] pour le purété des ordonnances, et qui bannit de la décoration les ornemens capricieux, qu'un goût de mode mesquin et bâtard avait depuis longtemps accredité." Had Soufflot been allowed to adhere to the "mode mesquin et bâtard" of his earlier years, he might have been as great an architect as A. J. Gabriel, possibly greater, but he allowed himself to be swayed by the *virtuosi*, and he lost his way in the catacombs of the classic revival, a revival dictated by amateurs, and supposed, for some obscure reason, to be the only possible embodiment of revolutionary ideals.

Quatremère de Quincy himself (though not an architect) had the audacity to interfere to a disastrous extent with Soufflot's designs. In April 1791 the Constituent Assembly ordered the transformation of S. Geneviève into a French Panthéon. De Quincy was appointed Commissioner for the Works, and his idea of his duty was stated in his report of 1791 : "L'édifice entier sera le catechisme figuré des devoirs de l'homme en société." The saints and angels floating in clouds of glory by Coustou, his old master, were to be removed, and for Houdon's "S. Peter receiving the Keys," was to be substituted Lesueur's "Les bienfaits de L'Instruction publique." No sculpture was to be admitted that did not convey some lofty moral allegory. No artist was to be allowed to take part in the scheme of decoration, who had not graduated in the strictest principles of "le goût antique," as taught in Italy by Winckelmann, and as practised by Canova. One has to bear this in mind in criticizing the Panthéon in its present state. It also appears from D'Argenville's account, that several features in the original design were never carried out, or else were removed at the bidding of this arbitrary dogmatist. D'Argenville[2] says the dome "sera flanqué de quatre avant corps qui porteront sur des soubassemens des socles un

[1] Instead of piers.

[2] "Vies," i, 484-5. He also says that it was intended to place above the summit of the dome a pedestal surmounted by figures of Religion and the four Evangelists.

peu élevés, décorés des groupes des huit pères de l'église." I am not clear what he means by "avant corps" here. If these groups had masked the four angles of the square below the drum of the dome, they would have materially helped the composition as a whole, and saved the design from the crude and inefficient treatment of the canted angles. It was Quatremère de Quincy who did away with the two towers 120 feet high at the east end designed by Soufflot, and had the windows in the walls built up in order that all the light might come from above in the true manner of the antique. The result of his interference with the sculpture was a blatant composition by Moitte for the pediment of the west front. Where Coustou had carved the Triumph of the Faith, Moitte proposed to substitute "La Patrie couronnant les Vertus," a stilted affair which suggested the insipid group, wrong in scale and relief, and lacking a sense of architecture, which was placed on this pediment by David d'Angers forty years later.[1] For the enormous entablature running round the building and necessitated by the order of the frontispiece, Soufflot was responsible. It is too big for the wall below, and Soufflot made it worse by placing beneath it a continuous band of swags, the full depth of the capitals of the order, the two together being some 20 feet deep, out of a total height from ground line to the top of the entablature of some 78 feet. The detail is commonplace,[2] and is misapplied in a single order façade without pilasters. Wren used this motive of a band of ornament continuous with the capitals of the order with consummate skill on the outside of S. Paul's, but he used it with a double order and in relation to flat engaged pilasters. "Le plus grand monument que la France ait vu élevé dans le dixhuitième siècle"[3] was a failure in many ways, but its qualities and defects are at least more attractive and more vital than the frigid accomplishment of the Madeleine, with its impeccable detail and total want of human interest.[4]

In 1765 Soufflot designed the sacristy of Notre Dame (now destroyed), and about this time is said to have made designs for the Hôtel de Ville of Bordeaux,[5] and for the Cathedral at Rennes in 1760

[1] See R. Schneider, "Quatremère de Quincy," pp. 33-49. Moitte's model was broken in 1823.

[2] It was altered by Quatremère de Quincy in his pursuit of seriousness and ethical significance.

[3] "Quatremère de Quincy."

[4] I refer to the existing Madeleine. The original design for this church was made by Contant before 1765, when Patte published his "Monumens erigés."

[5] Bauchal. Apparently never carried out. The existing Hôtel de Ville of Bordeaux is the old Archiepiscopal Palace designed in 1777 by Etienne for the Prince Rohan de Gueminée, Archbishop of Bordeaux.

and 1763, but this building was not begun till after his death. The interior is finely designed. Isolated Ionic columns on low pedestals support an entablature above which the barrel vault rises immediately without any intermediate attic or pedestal. The nave is lit by window openings formed in the sides of the vault over alternate bays. There is a cupola on pendentives over the crossing, and a shallow choir with a semicircular apse and columns supporting a semi-dome. Quatremère de Quincy's insistence on the use of isolated columns directly supporting the entablature, instead of piers with arches had, in fact, been anticipated by competent French architects by at least thirty years.

In 1770 Soufflot designed the uninteresting Hôtel Dieu at Macon, but can have given little attention to the design, and he was again at Lyons in 1772-3, where in recognition of his great services to the town as an architect and "son disinteressement," he was appointed "contrôleur général des embellissements de la ville." Soufflot was a generous man. When he prepared his designs for the École de Droit de Paris he declined to receive any fee, though he was by no means a rich man. Of his other works the most interesting is Menars, near Blois. Soufflot was certainly employed here by Marigny, but nobody seems to be quite certain what he did. Menars was bought by Mme. de Pompadour in 1760, and an extensive reconstruction was begun, but she died in 1764,[1] and left the property to her brother, Marigny, who completed the rebuilding and furnished his house with "loans" from the Royal Collections of pictures, sculpture, furniture, and bric-à-brac, which he took good care never to return. The curious thing about Menars is that the detail of its exterior might lead one to suppose that it had been built in the first half of the seventeenth century, for the rustications to the angles and the windows recall those of Cheverny, the Hôtel Limur at Vannes, and Balleroy in Normandy. Marigny is said to have contemplated the purchase of Cheverny, but was deterred by the advice of Soufflot, and when he rebuilt Menars may have instructed Soufflot to follow the details of Cheverny.[2] The entrance to Menars is one of the best approaches to a country house on a moderate scale to be found in France. A wide avenue of chestnuts leads from the main road to the iron gates set

[1] See Fernand Bournon ("Blois Chambord," pp. 127-133).

[2] The elevations are, of course, quite different, but this revival of details that had been out of fashion in France for over a hundred years is remarkable. The Eclectic and the Revivalist were already at work, but in the Orangery and the Temple d'Amour at Menars Soufflot followed his natural bent.

between lodges about 16 feet square. Inside the lodges is a *cour d'honneur* about 65 paces wide by 110 long, flanked by a double line of chestnuts and bounded by walls, with an oval grass plot in the centre. At the further end of this court are two advanced blocks of building about 34 paces long by 26 wide, 54 paces apart, and set 28 paces in advance of the house itself. These with the house itself form the forecourt, and by this skilful distribution of courts, avenues, and advanced pavilions, the house is set well back at the end of the vista as the culminating feature of the whole scheme. These eighteenth-century architects realized that a building with no care taken of its approaches and surroundings is a building "manqué." Both here and at S. Geneviève, where a great Place was part of his scheme, Soufflot showed that he was conscious of the necessity of the right environment to complete his architecture. Among his less important works, the Church of the Visitation at Le Mans is notable for the clever treatment of the external staircase at the west end, where the ground falls sharply, and the road winds in so close to the church that there was only room for stairs on the south side of the central door. The interior is rather dull, and the effort at subtle refinements of line too obvious.

Soufflot personally seems to have been one of the most attractive of all the French architects. His biographers describe him as a man of a quick and impetuous temper, and "un ton brusque et tranchant,"[1] which was often misunderstood, and of which he was conscious himself, for according to D'Argenville, he often apologized next day for his "vivacités" of yesterday. He was a man of generous instincts, enthusiastic for his art and entirely free from the instincts of the tradesman; de Quincey says, "Soufflot était d'un caractère vif, il avait l'humeur brusque; mais le cœur sensible, noble et généreux." Some of his colleagues appear to have treated him with treacherous disloyalty, and as usual built the tombs of the prophets after they had stoned them.[2]

Two other great churches were begun in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the church of the Madeleine and the Cathedral of Arras, both designed and begun by Contant d'Ivry, "Architecte du Roi," but completed by other hands. Contant was born at Ivry-sur-Seine, in 1698, was a pupil of Dulin and was admitted to the Academy

[1] D'Argenville.

[2] The "Nouvelle Biographie Générale" says that Soufflot published his works in two volumes, folio, in 1767. I have not been able to find a copy of this.

NORTH TRANSEPT, ARRAS CATHEDRAL, IN 1913 (p. 143)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

in 1728. Blondel[1] refers to his skill as a designer of gardens and his work at S. Cloud and elsewhere, and Bauchal attributes to him an hotel in the Place Vendôme, an hotel for the Prince de Soubise, and other buildings. He was Architecte du Roi, Controller of the Hôtel des Invalides, and architect to the Duc d'Orléans. The Cathedral of Arras was begun from his designs about the middle of the eighteenth century and was not completed till 1833. It was[2] an enormous building of stone with a nave and arches in six bays, transepts in three bays, a dome over the Crossing, and a choir in three bays with semi-circular apse at the end, and a circular Lady Chapel beyond. The scale throughout was immense. On the outside there were flying buttresses of great solidity to meet the thrust of the vaulting. Here anticipating Soufflot, Contant used isolated columns, and formed the four supports of the dome with clusters of three separate Corinthian columns (some 4 feet 6 inches in diameter) instead of solid piers. On the exterior he adhered to the double order, and indeed to the traditional method of an order below with its entablature complete, with a secondary order above to mask the clere-story. The Cathedral stands on rapidly falling ground, and Contant made a skilful use of this in his treatment of the north transept, and on the west front he dealt with it by a noble flight of forty-eight stairs with four landings, extending beyond the west front to a total width of some 114 feet. The very poor details of the interior were carried out after Contant's death. Contant also designed at Arras the Episcopal Palace (or Abbaye of S. Vaast) with its elaborate entrance. The details and profiles are rather wiry and attenuated. Contant was an able architect, but he lacked the rich vitality of Gabriel, and one notes in all these later eighteenth century architects a certain forced and arid quality, evidence of a failure in invention which was ultimately to drive them back to merely academic design.

In 1764 Contant was entrusted with the design of the Madeleine,

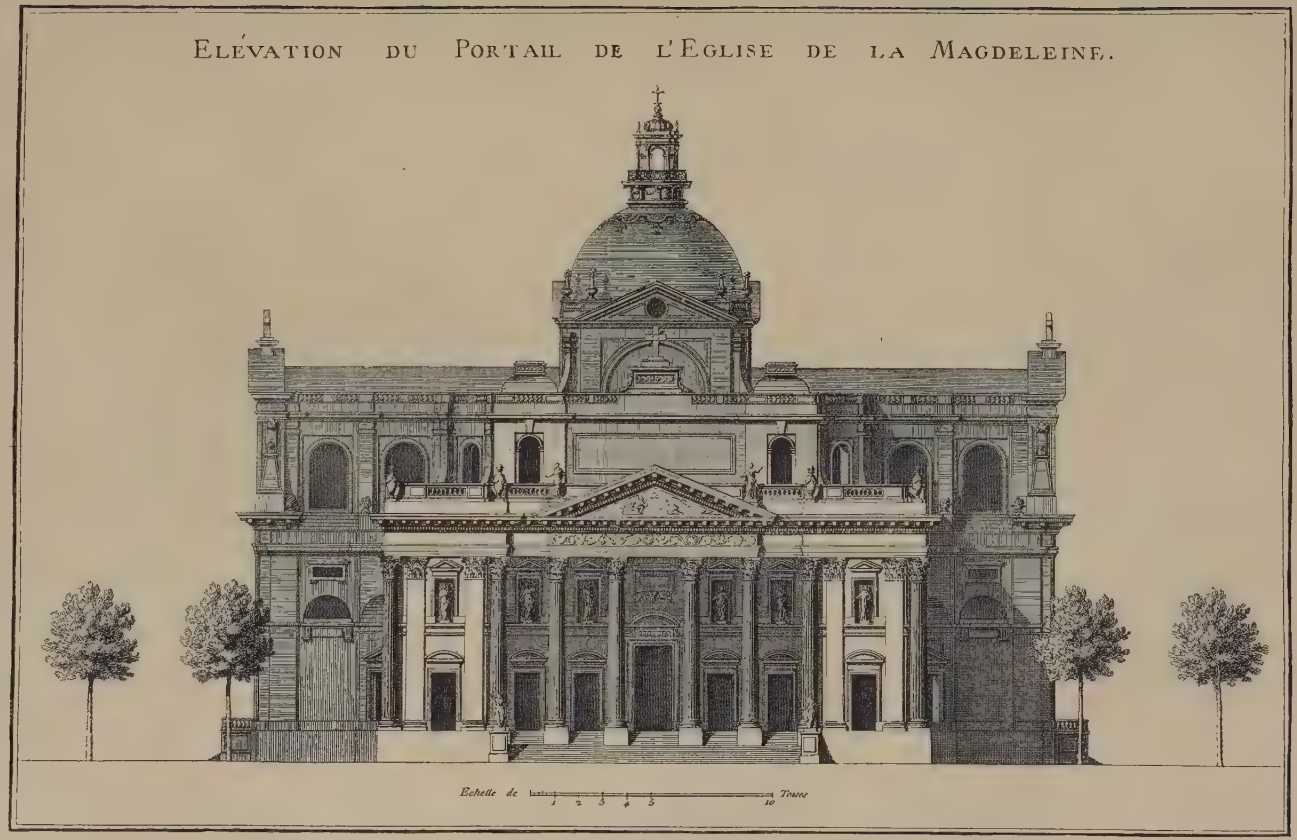
[1] "Arch. Fran.," i, 239.

[2] I inspected the cathedral in February 1918, after the German bombardment. The north transept (shown in the sketch) and the houses adjoining were down in a heap of débris in the street. All the vaulting was destroyed except the dome of the Lady Chapel and the flat brick vaulting à la Roussillon in some of the bays of the aisles. The interior was blocked many feet high with heaps of broken brick and stone. The shelling had laid bare the construction, and I found that the flat vaulting of the aisles rested on straight stone arches tied in with iron tie rods and suspending rods at top and bottom. On the west front the columns of the upper order had fallen, but the entablature above them was still standing. The whole of the west front of the Episcopal Palace to the south of the Cathedral is destroyed, but the interior to the courtyard and Contant's entrance were then intact.

the great church which was to complete the vista northwards of Gabriel's designs for the Place Louis XV. In the design of this church, which is fully illustrated in Patte, Contant adhered to the traditional French eighteenth century type with two important deviations. At the west end, instead of the usual order above order, he stopped his nave abruptly and added beyond it a portico of a single Corinthian order,[1] the pediment of which was to be kept below the clerestory of the nave and to abut against it. The effect would have been questionable, as the portico had even less relation to the rest of the design than Soufflot's prodigious portico at the Panthéon. The other innovation to which Patte calls particular attention, was the curious and original planning of the space under and around the central dome. The dome, which was some forty feet in diameter, was carried by pendentives on four piers formed by three engaged columns. Round the square formed by these piers ran a broad aisle twenty-eight feet wide to the nearest column of the choir, transepts and nave; Patte says, "Cet arrangement est absolument neuf et rendra cet endroit, qui a coutume d'être si reserrée dans nos églises, vaste, spacieux et capable de contenir un peuple immense." This might have been true, but the effect of this gigantic baldachino in the centre of the church would probably have been extremely bizarre. Contant also proposed to return his entablature round each of his columns, the effect of which would have been very bad, for it is of the essence of the isolated column and lintol treatment that the entablature should be continuous and unbroken. But in spite of these points which are open to criticism, Contant's plan, and indeed the whole design, are remarkable for their originality. It was unfortunate that the church was not nearly completed when the Revolution came, and that nothing further was done to it till Napoleon took it into his head to have it transformed into a Roman Temple dedicated to the soldiers of the "grande armée." He himself selected Vignon's design as most in harmony with the Palais Legislatif, and least likely to "écraser les Tuileries." Vignon died in 1829, and the church was completed by Huvé and opened in 1842.

Contant entered for the great competition of 1748 and selected a site on the Quai Malaquais opposite the grand gallery of the Louvre. Here he proposed to erect a new Hôtel de Ville with a broad Place between it and the river, and a garden at the back running out to the

[1] The columns of the Corinthian order are shown 42 feet high. To the right of the portico was a chapel for christenings, to the left a chapel for marriages.



[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

WEST ELEVATION OF THE MADELEINE AS DESIGNED BY CONTANT (p. 144)

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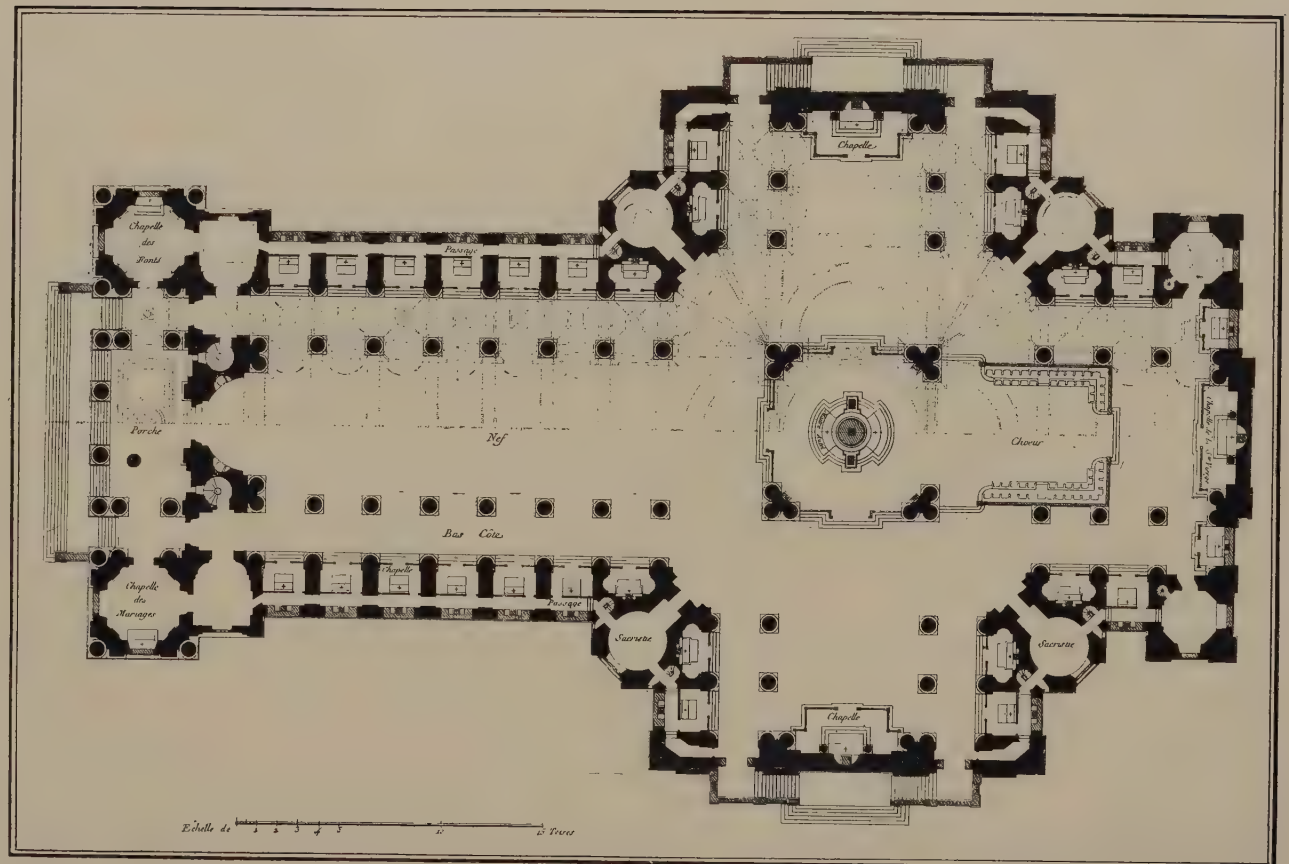
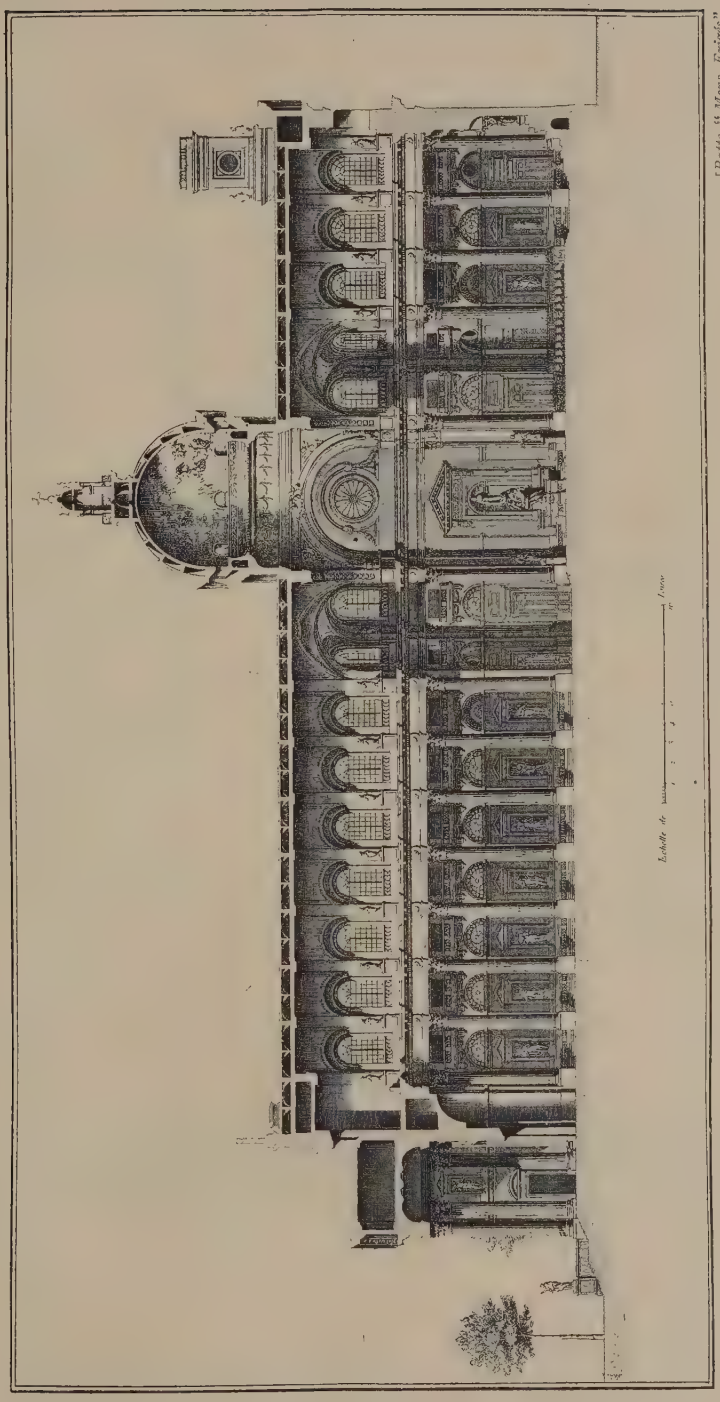


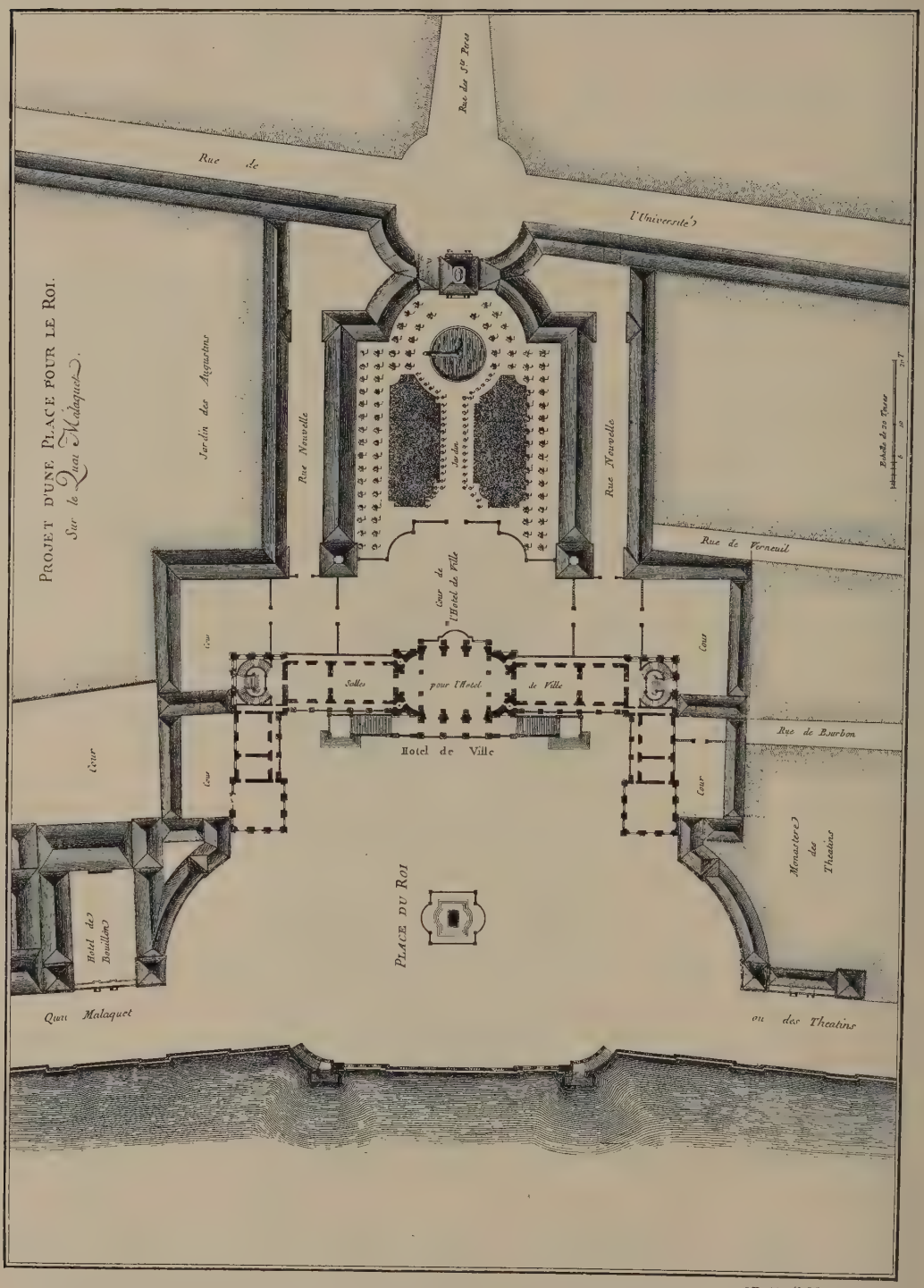
[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

PLAN OF CONTANT'S DESIGN FOR THE MADELEINE (see p. 144)



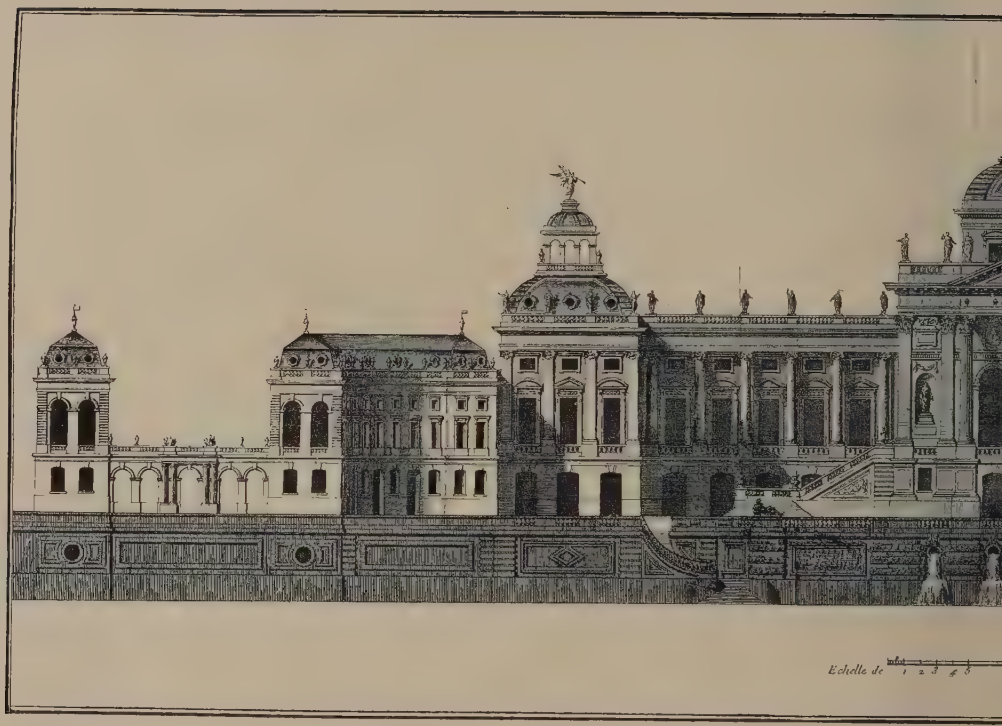
SECTION OF DESIGN FOR THE MADELEINE BY CONTANT (see p. 144)

[*Patte, "Mons. Eriges"*



[*Patte, "Mons. Erigés"*

PLAN OF DESIGN SUBMITTED IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE PLACE LOUIS XV BY CONTANT (see p. 144)



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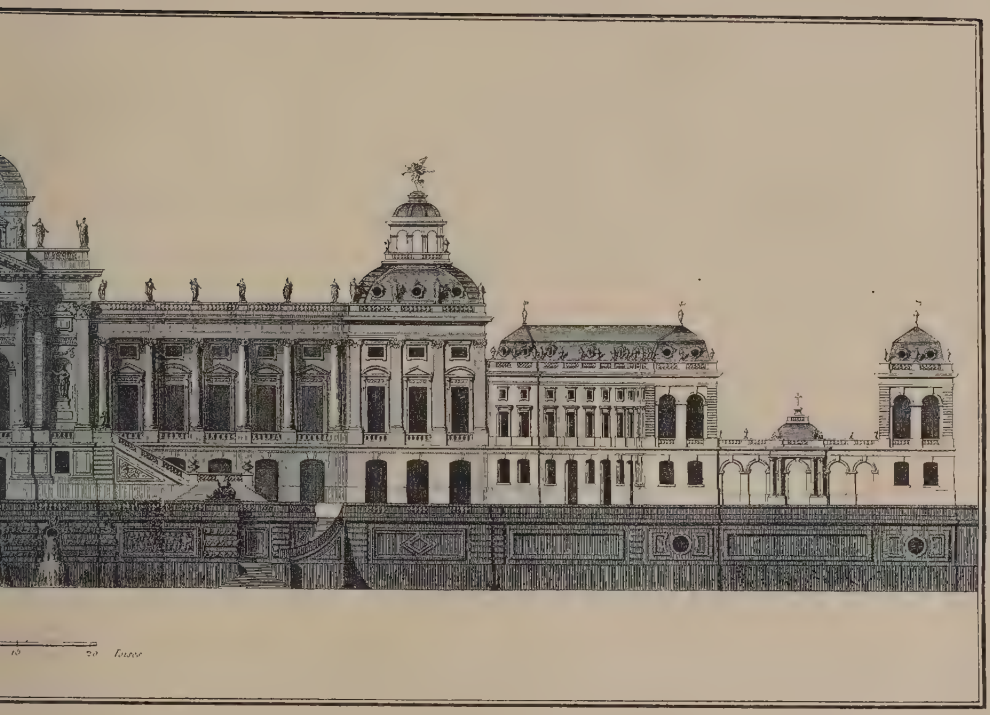


OR THE PLACE LOUIS XV. BY CONTANT (p. 144)
ENS ÉRIGÉS")

Rue de l'Université. Bouchardon's statue was to occupy the centre of the Place, which was to extend for 524 feet along the river with a depth back from the river to the front of the building of 324 feet. Patte says: "la décoration de l'Hôtel de Ville . . . est de l'ordonnance la plus majestueuse." The central portico was finely designed, but in the quadrants at either end the scale broke down. Apart from this serious fault, it was one of the best designs sent in.

Contant died in 1777, a considerable man in his time and a fine architect now almost forgotten. In their latter days, both he and Soufflot had surrendered to the craze for archaeological revivals instead of adhering to the national tradition, but both Soufflot and Contant belonged to the older school, to the generation of those fine artists who were fortunate in dying before the Revolution,[1] before French painting was nearly ruined by David, French sculpture by David D'Angers and French architecture by the pedantry of Quatremère de Quincy.

[1] Contant died in 1777, Soufflot in 1780, J. A. Gabriel in 1782, Lemoyne, the sculptor, in 1778, Pigalle in 1785, Falconet in 1791, J. Caffieri in 1792: Houdon, Clodion and Pajou had done all their best work before the Revolution; Boucher had died in 1770; Fragonard fled to Grasse in 1789.

CHAPTER XXVII

Blondel, Patte, Mique

EVER since the days of Vitruvius it has been the practice of architects to write about their art, and in this regard architecture differs from the sister arts. One can count on one's fingers the artists who have written on painting and sculpture. Painters and sculptors, if they are to attain to excellence in their art, have to cut short their general education in order to start their special training at a time when their fingers are still supple and their habits of observation not yet set. Moreover, owing to its technical difficulties, architecture escaped the attentions of the literary man till comparatively recent years. Alberti, Serlio, Palladio, Scamozzi, De l'Orme, Bullant, the Blondels, Perrault, Chambers and Patte, were not literary men, but architects, and when they wrote on architecture they stuck to their text and seldom wandered outside it; but though Claude Perrault wrote well, and the younger Blondel was an acute and learned critic, it must be admitted that these interminable disquisitions on the orders are extremely dull reading, and that their result has been to make an unnecessary mystery of the art of architecture and to remove it from the market-place to the study. Unfortunately, a writer of brilliant genius, but of inaccurate methods of thought, descended on the art in the last century and left it the easy prey of writers with little knowledge of the art, or any appreciation of what it has to do and what it can do, but possessed of much emotional sensibility and a fluent habit of prose. Thus it is, that whereas in the eighteenth century educated people had a clear and definite conception of architecture, nowadays they regard it as hardly worth thinking about. It must also be admitted that architects in the past have too often abused their opportunities by converting what purported to be treatises on the art into vehicles of personal advertisement. The eighteenth century folios, both French and English, were often little

more than sumptuous advertisements of the author. Yet even so they are documents of historical value, not only on account of the buildings which they illustrate, but for the evidence which they afford of the point of view of the architects of that period. No building illustrates so clearly the difference of standpoint between the eighteenth century and our own time, as J. F. Blondel's "Cours d'Architecture" or "Architecture Francaise." Among all writers on architecture the younger Blondel stands alone, not merely because he was an author of amazing industry, but because he was a sound and competent critic, with a real appreciation of the finest qualities of architecture. Jacques François Blondel was born at Rouen in 1705, and was the nephew of a Jean François Blondel, an architect of Rouen (1683-1756) who was admitted to the Academy in 1728,[1] but appears to have been no relation to the famous François Blondel the first director of the Academy of Architecture. Jacques François came to Paris about 1728[2] and in 1752 carried out some work at the Hotel d'Aumont, but from the first his chief aim in architecture seems to have been to expound not only its principles but its technical details to his countrymen. His first work was entitled "De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la décoration des édifices en général," a rare and beautiful book in two volumes, published by Jombert of Paris in 1737, with 160 plates drawn and engraved by Blondel, who was an excellent draughtsman and skilful engraver. Blondel dedicated his work to Turgot as "les premiers fruits de mes études," and with this introduction to the public he started his School of Architecture in 1739. The Academy School was inadequate; students were taught little but drawing. Gabriel,[3] the Director, was old and lazy, and according to D'Argenville there was no school at the time in Paris at which a young architect could learn the details of his art. Blondel was so successful that, in spite of the fact that he had done little architectural work of his own, he was admitted a member of the Academy in 1755 and in 1762 appointed Professor of Architecture, a post which he held till his death in 1774. He carried out some minor decorations in the churches of S. Gervais and S. Jean en Grève at Paris, but does not appear to have been consulted on important works till the last ten years of his life. In 1763 he prepared plans for the church of the Abbaye

[1] Ange Jacques Gabriel, Jean Courtonne, and Contant d'Ivry were admitted in the same year—1728—when eight places of "architecte de deuxième-classe" were created by letters patent.

[2] His daughter was baptized at S. Eustache in 1729.

[3] Gabriel the elder.

Royale des Dames Chanoinesses de S. Louis at Metz which were approved by the King at Fontainebleau in 1763 ("Cours d'Architecture," ii, 94). In 1766 he made a most elaborate project for the lay out of Cateau Cambresis, six leagues from Cambrai, for the Archbishop of Cambrai, and about the same time he prepared an enormous scheme [1] for the gardens and grounds of a German prince unnamed, and another for a hunting seat in Germany for an Elector. In 1764 he made designs for the Hôtel de Ville, for the decoration of the Place d'Armes, the chapter house and Sacristy of the Cathedral of Metz, and in this year, the town of Strasbourg having decided to build barracks, a Place d'Armes, a Senate House and a Salle de Spectacles, and to remodel the town, requested the Duc de Choiseuil to nominate an architect. Choiseuil nominated Blondel, who prepared the plans, and says that these were being carried out at the the time he issued his "Cours d'Architecture" in 1771. Blondel says that it was his work at Strasbourg that led to his being employed at Cateau Cambresis and Cambrai.[2] With these exceptions Blondel was not successful as a practising architect and it appears that he was impoverished by the cost of his great publications, and that his love of pleasure prevented any attempt at economy. In his old age he married a young girl as his second wife,[3] and embittered by his troubles became somewhat forgetful "que sa jeune épouse les partageait sans murmures," but his enthusiasm for the work of his life held good to the end. Feeling that his illness was fatal, he had himself moved to his school in the Louvre in January 1774, and died there four days later.

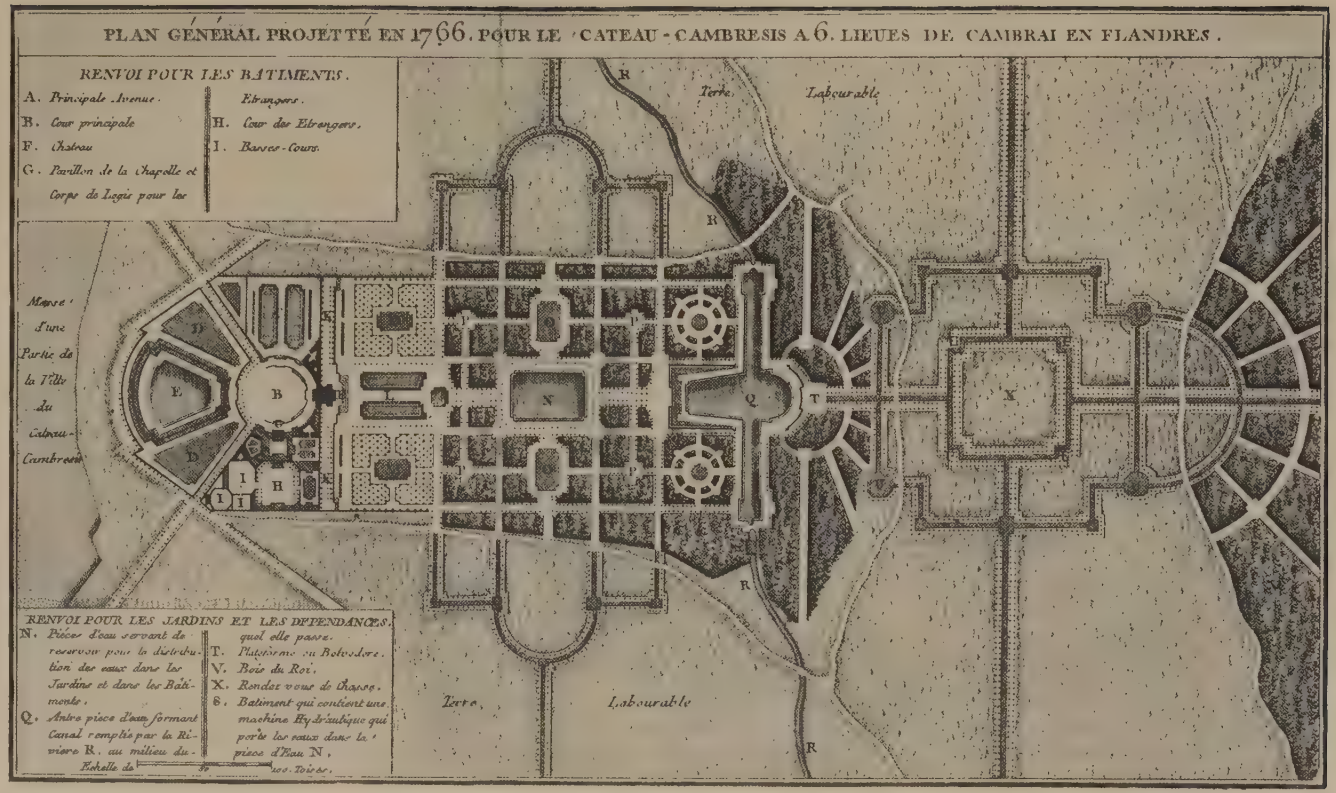
Blondel's designs for Metz, Cambrai, Strasbourg, and elsewhere, are illustrated in his "Cours d'Architecture." [4] With the exception of the Church for the Chanoinesses at Metz, an ingenious if rather forced design, they are extremely disappointing. His churches, a gigantic cathedral, and an even more exaggerated parish church, are absurd.

[1] "Cours," iv, 88-94. Pl. xxv.

[2] See "J. F. Blondel et son œuvre," par Aug. Prost, Metz, 1860, and "Cours d'Architecture," i, 115-117. D'Argenville says: "Un ordre du roi l'envoya à Metz, il fit un projet général, d'embellissement pour toute la ville: il donna des plans d'agrandissement et d'alignment des anciennes rues et des percés pour de nouvelles."

[3] Manon Baletti, daughter of a famous Italian actress. In order to marry Blondel she jilted no less a person than the redoubtable Jacques Casanova, "Sieur de Seingalt," and took refuge from that whirlwind of passion under the safe shelter of les Convenances. Casanova gives a characteristic account of the incident in his amazing "Memoirs" (iv, chap. vi), and he also gives the date, 1759.

[4] Vols. iii (369-420) and iv, and plates in vols. vii and viii.


PLAN GÉNÉRAL PROJETTÉ EN 1766. POUR LE CATEAU-CAMBRESIS A 6. LIEUES DE CAMBRAI EN FLANDRES.
RENVOI POUR LES BATIMENTS.
A. Principale Avenue.
B. Cour principale
F. Chateau
G. Pavillon de la Chapelle et Corps de Logis pour les Etrangers.
H. Cour des Etrangers.
I. Basses-Cours.
Masse d'une Partie de la Ville du Cateau-Cambresis
Terre Labourable
RENVOI POUR LES JARDINS ET LES DEPENDANCES.
N. Piéces d'eau servant de reservoir pour la distribution des eaux dans les Jardins et dans les Bâtimens.
Q. Autre piece d'eau formant Canal rempli par la Riviere R. au milieu du quel elle passe.
T. Plateforme ou Belvedere.
V. Bois du Roi.
X. Rendez vous de Chasse.
8. Batiment qui contient une machine Hydraulique qui porte les eaux dans la piece d'Eau N.
Echelle de 50 100. Toises.

PLAN OF GROUNDS AND GARDENS, CATEAU CAMBRESIS. DESIGNED BY J. F. BLONDEL (p. 148)

(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE," IX, iv)

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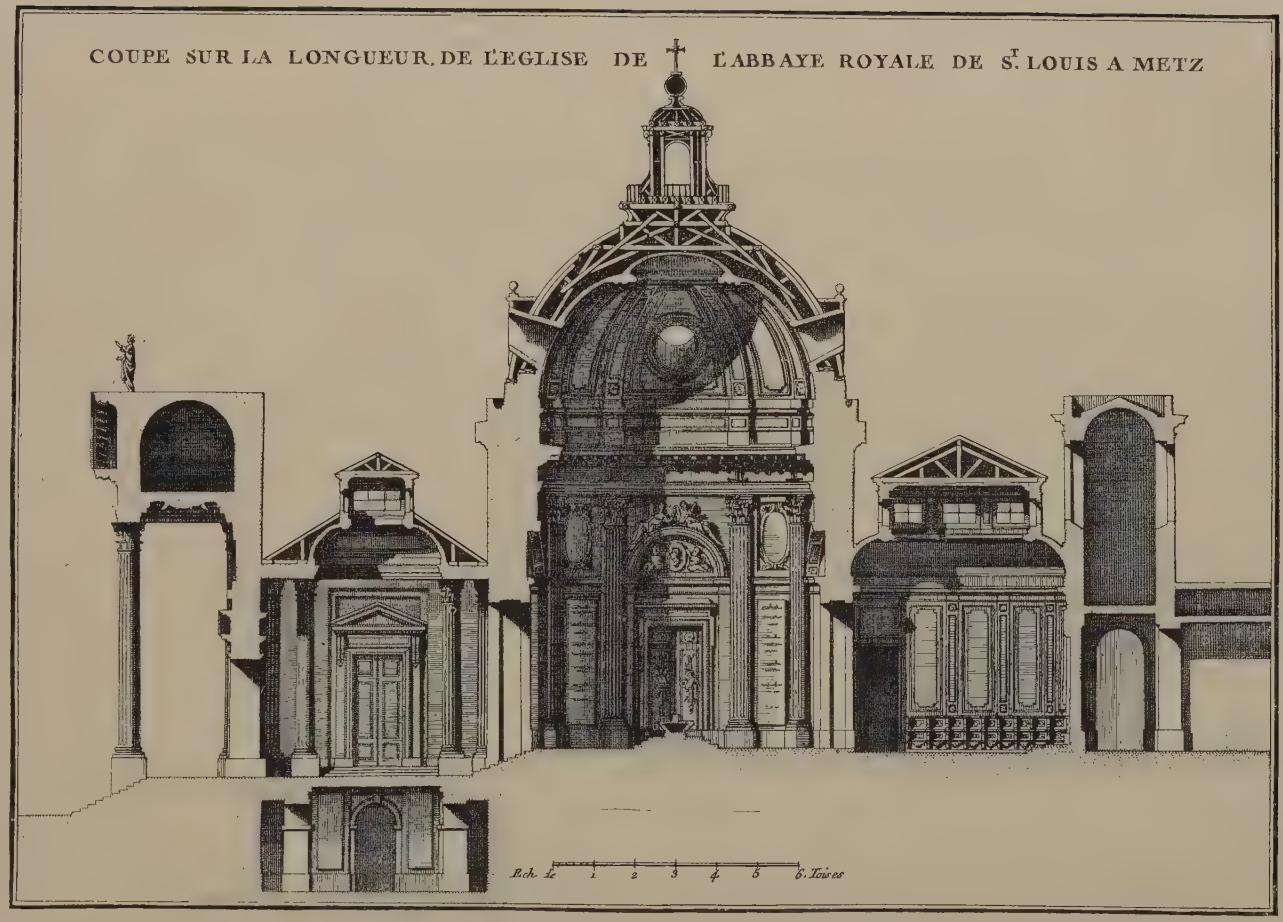
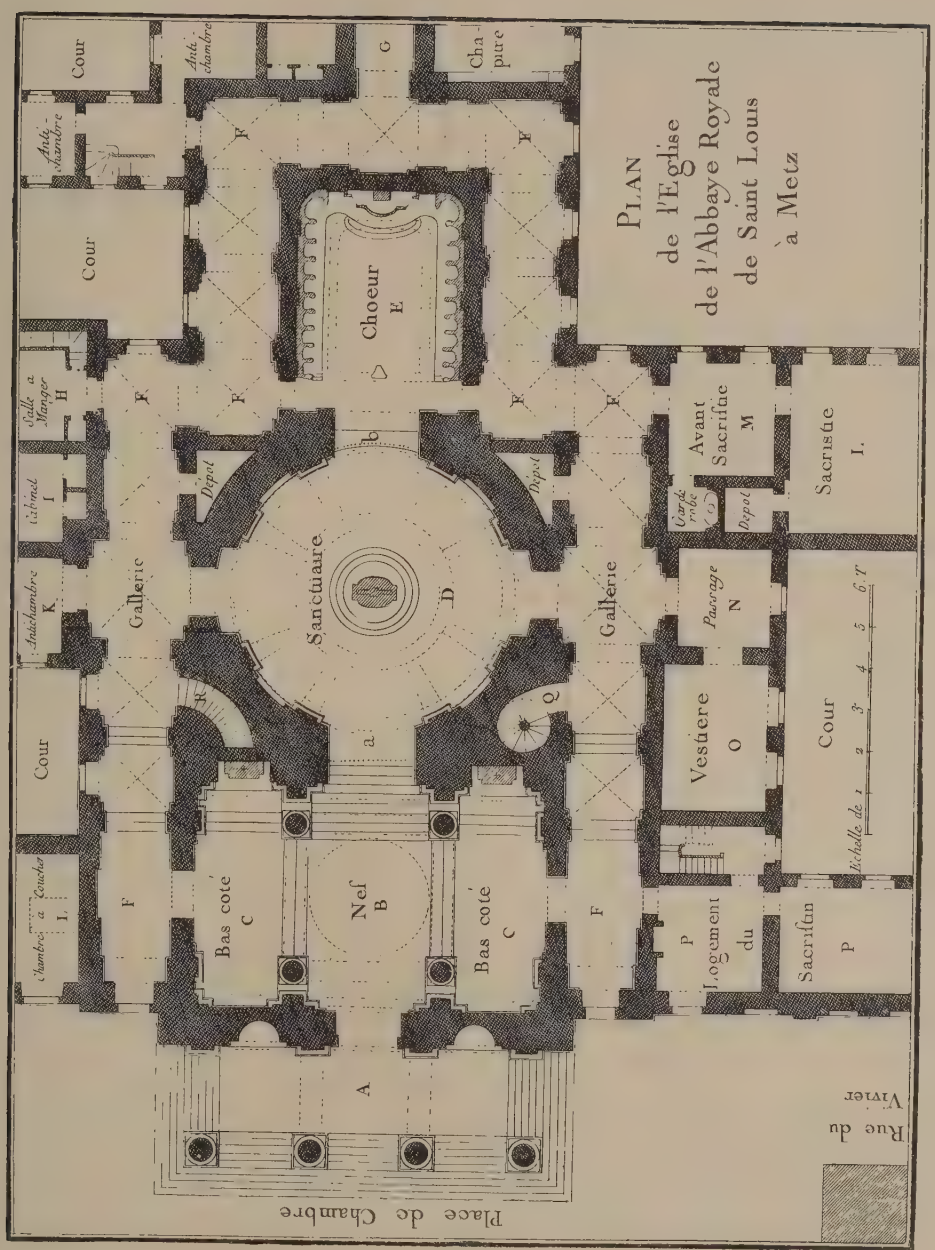


SECTION OF CHURCH AT METZ. DESIGNED BY J. F. BLONDEL

(FROM BLONDEL, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE," VIII, iii)



PLAN OF CHURCH AT METZ, DESIGNED BY J. F. BLONDEL (see p. 148)

The nave alone of the parish church is 315 feet long in sixteen bays, the total length of the church out to out being some 740 feet. His garden projects were not less ambitious and impracticable. His design for the grounds of the German prince measures over a mile long by one-third wide, with not a single plain piece of grass over its whole surface, nothing but parterres, bosquets, boulingrins, canals, salles de spectacles, de bal, des antiques, cabinets de verdure, and the whole paraphernalia of the complete garden designer of the first part of the eighteenth century. It was designs such as this that dragged down the great tradition of Le Nôtre, and left it exposed to the impudent ignorance of the landscape gardener. His designs for the town-planning of Strasbourg and Metz show little imaginative grasp of the problem. Consummate professor and excellent draughtsman as he was, Blondel did not, in fact, possess much power of design. With his pen in hand, or with his pupils before him, his judgment was sound, his criticism penetrating and sure, but when he took up his pencil, his cunning left him. He could accumulate the orders and all the details of architectural design which he knew so well, and yet he could do nothing with them. There was no glimmer of creative fire. His invention was commonplace, his taste uncertain, and at times even vulgar. He failed to catch that "simplicité mâle," which he very rightly considered to be one of the highest qualitities of architecture, and the worst of it was that, though not a vain man, he was not conscious of his own limitations. In spite of his profound admiration for Perrault, he thought he could improve his design for the colonnade of the Louvre by substituting for his entrance a grand external staircase to the first floor, but the design is very dull. Blondel's criticisms were sound enough, but his attempts to translate them into practice, were only less inept than the suggestions of the late James Fergusson.

As an academic critic, however, and as a teacher with profound knowledge of his subject, Blondel stands unrivalled, and his works, "Maisons de Plaisance," "Architecture Française," and the "Cours d'Architecture" remain to this day the most complete and authoritative account ever given of modern classical architecture. The "De La Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance" appeared in 1737; his immense work, "Architecture Française" in 1751-52 and 1756, and his "Cours d'Architecture," the lessons given in his own and the Academy School during the twenty years from 1750-70, were published in 1771-72-73-77. Two years before his death Blondel wrote a book entitled "L'Homme du Monde éclairé par les arts," an attempt to

instruct persons of quality in the principles of art. But he adopted the tedious form of letters from the "Comte de Saleran," the "Comtesse de Vauyer," and so on, and the work was a failure.[1]

Blondel's serious works, by which he will always be remembered, were: (1) "De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance," 1737; (2) "L'Architecture Française"; and (3) the "Cours d'Architecture."[2] His first work was produced when he was only thirty-two, having been, as he says in his preface, "ignoré et comme enseveli dans le Cabinet depuis plusieurs années," but he states that not only had he made a most industrious study of all authors, but he had visited the best modern buildings and been guided by the advice of the most eminent architects, painters, and sculptors. This method of constant reference to contemporary work he adhered to in all his books on architecture. From the first he wrote with a view to modern practice, and whether he was dealing with the country house and garden, as in the "Maisons de Plaisance," or with architecture in general in his systematic "Cours," or with the "catalogue raisonnée" of the "Architecture Française," he proceeded upon certain principles to a critical comparison not only of ancient examples, but of modern works right down to the actual date at which he wrote. Thus, in his "Cours," he refers to works by Chalgrin and Antoine, and to the churches of S. Geneviève and the Madeleine, then scarcely started. His object throughout was to explain architecture, its purpose, its groundwork in thought. He was still faithful to the tradition of the early days of the Academy of Architecture: "La raison sur tout."[3] In his preface he says: "Nous avons sur tout cherché a analyser ce qu'en peut appeler le raisonnement de l'architecture."[4] His thoroughness was extraordinary. In the "Maisons de Plaisance" every conceivable detail that might be required in the design of a gentleman's country house and gardens is dealt with methodically. He starts with the entrance to the park, and carries through to the details of the bath-room and the candlesticks. In the four volumes of the "Architecture Française" the minuteness of his method makes it an impossible book to read. No detail escapes him, nothing is spared to the wearied student, and it is the same with the "Cours d'Architecture." Whatever the faults of eighteenth century methods of training, they were

[1] It was published at Amsterdam in 1775.

[2] He also contributed articles on architecture to the "Encyclopaedia."

[3] On the title page of De Bosse's "Traité des Manières de dessiner les ordres."

[4] Preface, p. xvi.

assuredly not superficial. Blondel takes up each detail of the orders, the Greek from Leroy,[1] as well as Roman, French, and Italian, and fairly worries them backward and forward till there is nothing more to say, and then combines them into a grand composition for the benefit of his students. He does the same with the various parts of buildings, staircases, balustrades, frontispieces, and the like, and at every point the student is referred to the works of recognized masters, ancient or modern, for actual examples; nor does he spare established reputations, however great. He apologizes for his audacity, yet justifies it on the ground that it is his duty to point out to his students not only what to admire but also what not to admire. Thus they will learn the elements of good taste, the all-important "goût" of the eighteenth century. Thus, on a reasoned theory of architecture, they will be able to discriminate not only between good and bad, but between good and the best, a point laboured by Boffrand in his efforts to define "good taste." His criticism of the garden front of Vaux le Vicomte is characteristic. Le Vau, as he says, had no real rival in his time but Perrault, and Vaux le Vicomte was his most notable work. Yet Blondel proceeds to demolish it with a criticism as rigorous as it is certainly sound. What, he asks, would have been the motive of "le Propriétaire opulent" in building this house? Clearly, he answers, "un château pour y faire sa residence pendant l'arrière saison," and this would involve living rooms facing south on the ground floor, with private rooms on the first floor, marked by two well-defined storeys on the façade. But what does Le Vau do? On a front of some 220 feet he used a colossal order for two-thirds of the front, and then in the centre incontinently dropped to orders above orders of less than half the diameter of the colossal order. The result is that there is no unity in the design, and it fails completely in "convenance," that is, in character suitable to the purpose of the building. He proceeds from this to the other faults of the design, the excessive size of the Dome, the heaviness of the roofs, the want of scale in the details, and the bad proportions, and finally warns his students against being misled by the example and success of Le Vau. He is scarcely less severe on L'Assurance. On the other hand, his admiration for François Mansart was so great that he hardly allows himself to criticize his work,[2] and his appreciation of Antoine Le Pautre, "un de nos

[1] Leroy's "Ruines des plus beaux Monuments de la Grèce," 1758. He gives Doric entablatures from the Temple of Theseus at Athens, and from the Temple of Minerva, as he somewhat crudely calls the Parthenon.

[2] "Cet artiste inestimable fut pour aussi dire le maître de tous ceux qui lui on succédé" ("Cours," iii, 362).

architectes encore trop peu connu parmi nous,"[1] was both just and generous. So, too, of Cartaud he says that he was "un grand homme, puisqu'au milieu du déréglement dont on faisoit parade dans les maisons particulières du commencement de ce siècle, cet architecte a sçu préférer un beau simple et un style grave à toutes les bizarreries que la plupart de ses contemporains élevoient sous ses yeux." Blondel always comes back to the same point, the "beau simple," austere dignity, as essential qualities of all architecture with any claim to be considered great.

Few writers have had a keener sense of the greatness of architecture than Blondel. In an age of license he fought stoutly for the restraint of serious art. His standpoint is quite definite. Architecture, he held, was supreme among the arts. The benefits conferred by the architect, he says, are such that they give the art an incontestable pre-eminence over all the other arts, "qu'elle seule régit, en les associant à ses travaux," and though he has no desire to disparage the excellence of the arts of sculpture, painting, and garden design, yet architecture is supreme, and he quotes as evidence the letters patent of 1717, "comme l'architecture doit avoir la pré-eminence sur les autres arts," etc.[2] Modern painters and sculptors are apt to consider architecture as only a vehicle and occasion for their respective arts, a position which, of course, no architect will accept, and which would have been treated as ridiculous in France throughout the greater part of the eighteenth century. Blondel would not even admit that sculpture was necessary to architecture. "La Belle Architecture se suffit à elle-même, la sculpture n'y doit être appelée, que pour la symboliser, et jamais pour l'enricher avec excés—la principale beauté des édifices d'importance dépend de la justesse de leurs proportions, de leur situation, du choix des matières et de la perfection de la main d'œuvre."[3] As the necessary corollary to this lofty claim for architecture, he demands a high standard of attainment in the architect. Draughtsmanship must be the basis of all their work, and if they are to be of any use not only must they possess "une profonde théorie, une très grande pratique, une longue suite d'expériences," but also an intimate knowledge of the works of the great masters. Only so can they hope to attain to the simple and the sublime, "ce beau, cette noble simplicité," which ought to characterize every building that they design. Blondel has not, in fact, any aesthetic standard or canon of design to offer his students

[1] "Cours," iii, 444, on the Hôtel de Beauvais.
[2] *Ibid.*, i, 124.
[3] *Ibid.*, ii, 44-5.

except the authority of the recognized masters. The orders are almost complete and perfect, but not quite, because, as he is at great pains to point out, there has been a wide diversity in regard to their use among the admitted masters. Moreover, some deviation from the rules must be permitted; otherwise design lapses into "sècheresse" and "stérilité." He seems to have accepted the multifarious details of the orders as established by long custom and authority, and to have held that the real issue in modern architecture was their correct employment, and applying this test of established use, he condemned the license of Bernini, Borromini, and their feeble copyist, Meissonnier. Broken pediments, or twisted columns,[1] "dérégléments du génie" were, therefore, to be avoided, and still more such follies as "les rocailles et les ornemens chinois qu'on a prodigués pendant vingt années dans tous nos bâtiments, et même jusques dans l'intérieur de nos Temples." When Blondel wrote this he forgot his own illustrations for internal decoration in his "Maisons de Plaisance," where he had indulged freely in rococo detail, and had even devoted a plate to designs for the termination of mouldings in shells and collops of the most licentious sort.[2] But his teaching was sounder than his practice; he was for ever insisting to his pupils on the necessity of restraint and sacrifice, that the whole is greater than its parts, and that no amount of elaborate detail will compensate for lack of proportion, lack of unity, and lack of reasonableness in the design as a whole: "tant il est vrai que le défaut de rapport dans une seule partie de l'édifice, niut essentiellement à l'ouvrage entier: alors le charme cesse et la décoration n'offre qu'un amas de membres d'architecture et d'ornements, qu'on ne regarde qu'avec indifférence."[3] Blondel's style is tedious and prolix,[4] but students who have the courage to face it, will find pure gold buried in his interminable pages. His school was very successful, many of his students rose to eminence, and his reiterated protests against the vulgarities of Oppenord and Meissonnier had their effect, but the reaction produced the pattern books of de Neufforge, whose dull and respectable designs were issued from 1757 to 1768, and after being approved by the

[1] Compare Aldrich, Dean of Christchurch, d. 1710. "Columnæ Tortiles, quosque vocant cartoccios, et scapi annulis revincti quasi fracti essent et refarciti, omnino fugiantur" ("Elementa Architecturæ Civilis," ed. 1789).

[2] See vol. ii, plates 90 and 92, or plate 23: A sphinx neatly draped in a chemise with a frilled collar and feathers in her hair, designed and drawn by Blondel himself.

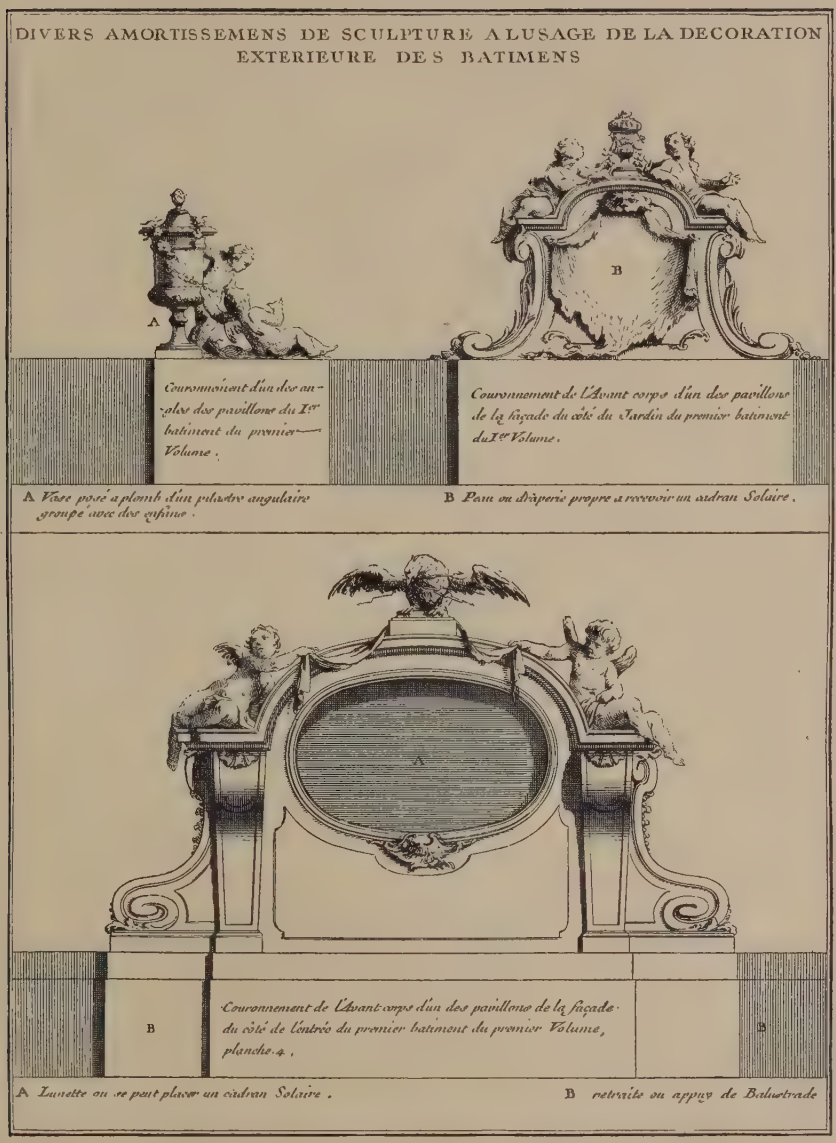
[3] "Cours," iii, 84.

[4] D'Argenville describes his "Arch. Fran." as "un ouvrage de luxe, qui n'a pas eu beaucoup de succès."

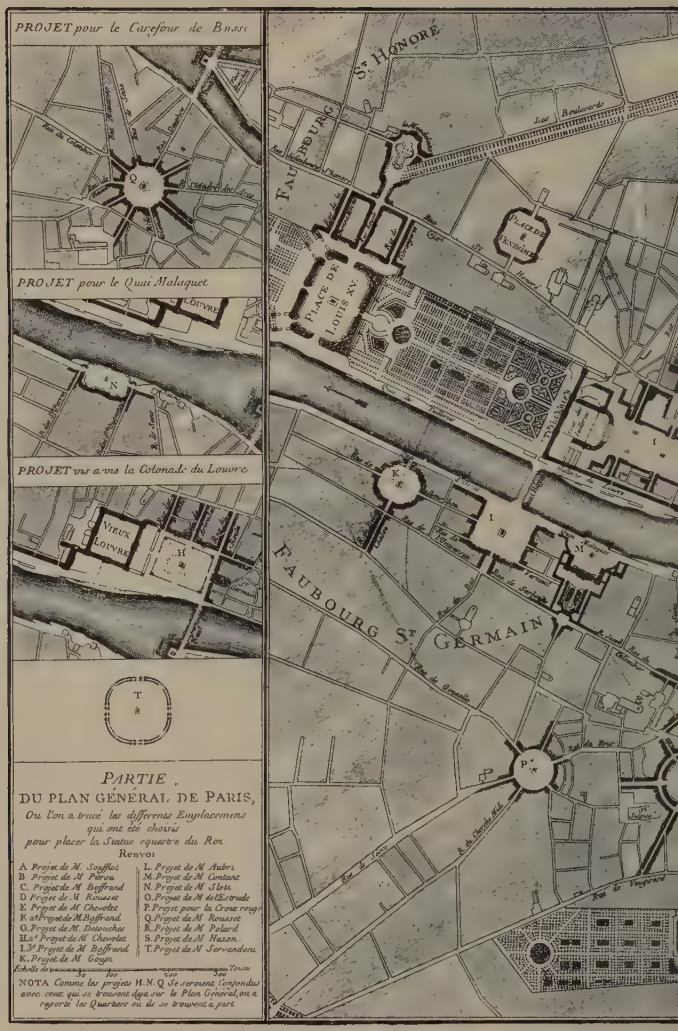
Academy in 1767, were continued as late as 1780. Blondel never seems to have appreciated properly the fine genius of Ange Jacques Gabriel, and though his writings are invaluable both as text books in the practice of modern classical design and as material for the historical student, I think that he unconsciously paved the way for the insincere and pedantic revival of the antique in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

In none of Blondel's writings is there any hint of the gathering storm. He assumed a settled state of society, and made his appeal to persons of condition and of ample means and leisure, whose principal occupation was their own amusement, and who accepted the existence of the lower classes on much the same terms as that of the cattle in the fields. Though Blondel expatiates on the importance of monumental buildings and great public improvements, it is less with an eye to the benefit of the community than to the exercise of architecture and the glorification of princes—for the eighteenth century was essentially the age of the noble patron. Yet it was also an age when architecture was appreciated for its own sake as a great and beautiful art, when there did exist a definite standard of attainment, and recognized canons of judgment. Throughout the wildest excesses of the decorator, the architect of the eighteenth century seldom lost touch of a certain dignity and sobriety of design, which are the exception in the modern architecture of our towns. It was the break-up of the old tradition that opened the floodgates of ignorance and vulgarity, and it is in this that modern architects are at a great disadvantage. They have to work as individual artists. They have no consensus of competent opinion to which to appeal, no certainty of adequate workmanship on which to rely. In the absence of tradition, they are without that standard which can only exist where there are established methods of design and execution. But in Blondel's day, at any rate prior to 1750, architects had all the advantage of a long recognized tradition, and, indeed, it was that alone which rendered possible such a highly technical art as French architecture of the eighteenth century. Only workmen trained in an old and authoritative school of craftsmanship could have met its extremely exacting demands. Indeed, it has to be admitted that not infrequently very commonplace motives of design are redeemed by the "main d'œuvre," by their exquisite precision of workmanship.

It is probable that most of the well-known French architects of the latter part of the eighteenth century passed through Blondel's school. He watched their careers with the keenest interest, sometimes,


DIVERS AMORTISSEMENS DE SCULPTURE A LUSAGE DE LA DECORATION EXTERIEURE DE S BATIMENS
A
B
Couronnoient d'un des angles des pavillons du Ier batiment du premier Volume.
Couronnement de l'Avant corps d'un des pavillons de la façade du côté du Jardin du premier batiment du Ier Volume.
A Vase posé a plomb d'un pilastre angulaire groupé avec des guirlandes.
B Plan ou draperie propre a recevoir un cadran Solaire.
A
B
B
Couronnement de l'Avant-corps d'un des pavillons de la façade du côté de l'entrée du premier batiment du premier Volume, planche 4.
A Lunette ou se peut placer un cadran Solaire.
B retraits ou appuy de Balustrade

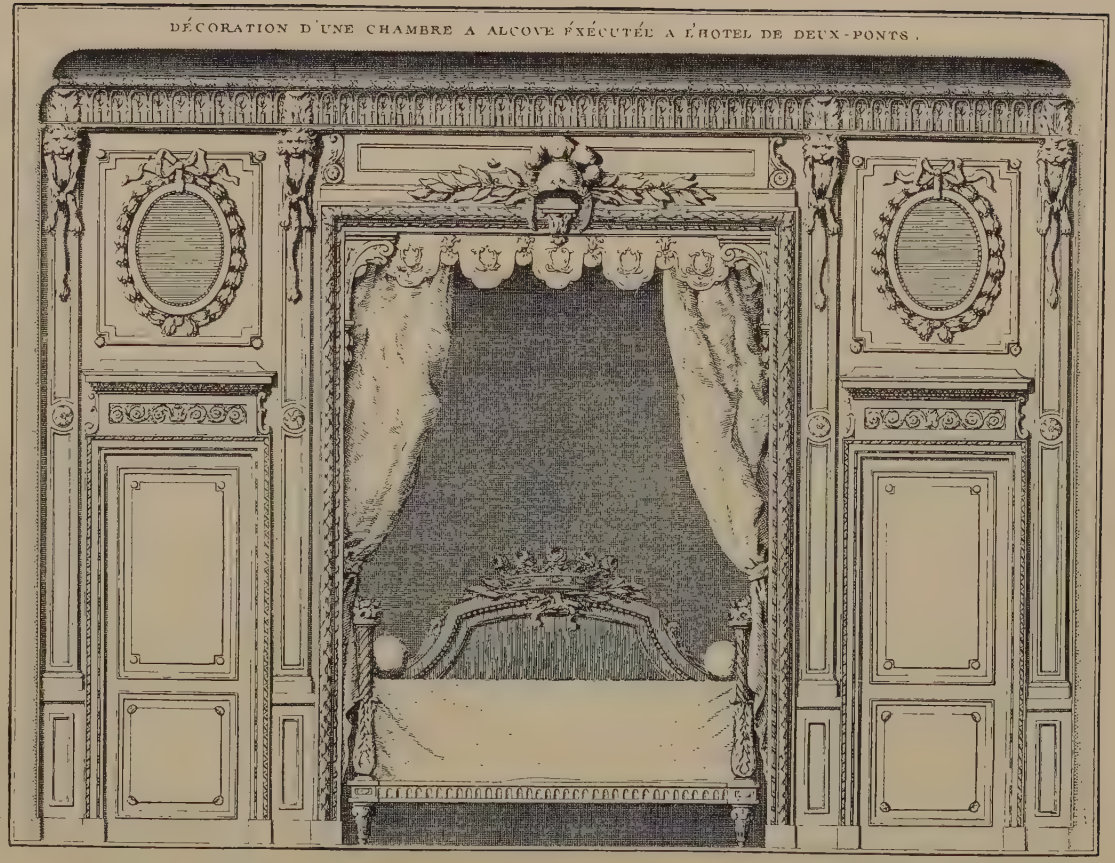
DESIGNS BY J. F. BLONDEL (see p. 153)
(FROM "MAISONS DE PLAISANCE," II, PL. XXXIII)


PROJET pour le Carefour de Buffy
PROJET pour le Quai Malaquet
PROJET vis avis la Colonade du Louvre
PARTIE
DU PLAN GÉNÉRAL DE PARIS,
Ou l'on a tracé les differents Emplacemens qui ont été choisis pour placer la Statue equestre du Roi
Renvoi
A. Projet de M. Soufflot
B. Projet de M. Pitrou
C. Projet de M. Boffrand
D. Projet de M. Rousset
E. Projet de M. Chevotet
F. 1er Projet de M. Boffrand
G. Projet de M. Dulanchet
H. 2e Projet de M. Chevotet
I. 3e Projet de M. Boffrand
K. Projet de M. Goyn
L. Projet de M. Aubri
M. Projet de M. Contant
N. Projet de M. Slotz
O. Projet de M. de Estrude
P. Projet pour la Croix rouge
Q. Projet de M. Rousset
R. Projet de M. Pelard
S. Projet de M. Hazon.
T. Projet de M. Servandoni
NOTA Comme les projets H.N.Q. se trouvent Confondus avec ceux qui se trouvent déja sur le Plan General on a reporté les Quartiers ou ils se trouvent a part
St. HONORÉ
FAUBOURG St. GERMAIN
PLACE DE LOUIS XV
PLACE DES VICTOIRES
VIEUX LOUVRE
LOUVRE

PLAN SHOWING SCHEMES SUBMITTED BY DIFFEREN

[*Patte, "Mons. Frigis"*

TECTS IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE PLACE LOUIS XV



DESIGN BY PATTE (p. 155)

(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE," IX, V)

II. TO FACE P. 155]

as he hints in one of his lectures, not without amusement, and I imagine in his latter days with regret at their desertion of the old tradition. The most loyal of his pupils was Pierre Patte, born at Paris, 1723. He travelled in France and Italy, and designed some buildings for the Duc de Deux Ponts, a German prince, who appointed him his architect, and Bauchal mentions designs of his for churches in Brittany, but he was not a member of the Academy, and his architectural work is of less importance than his writings. It was Patte who led the attack on Soufflot's design of the dome of S. Geneviève, he edited and completed Blondel's "Cours d'Architecture," and in 1765 brought out his famous "Monumens Erigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV," a work second only in importance to Blondel's "Architecture Francaise," for the historical study of French architecture in the eighteenth century.[1] The publication of the "Cours d'Architecture" began in 1771 with vols. i and ii, vol. iii was published in 1772, vol. iv in 1773, and the last two volumes (v and vi) after Blondel's death in 1777.[2] The first four volumes were published anonymously, Blondel modestly declining to bring them out himself, being conscious, he says, in his old age, of the faults of his lectures, and of the dangers of the enthusiasm of his youth. Blondel was nearly seventy, and felt unequal to the labour of revision; he therefore handed over his MSS. to his pupil, and his concluding words are not without a pathetic dignity. "Je n'aspire plus qu'à la retraite, au silence; ma carrière est remplie: ne donnez mes observations que pour ce qu'elles valent, et que votre amitié ne s'aveugle pas sur quelques talents que je dois plus à mon zèle qu'a mes lumières."[3] He recognized sadly that the brilliant draughtsmanship and the slashing criticism of thirty years before were things of the past.[4] Patte discharged his duties in a very loyal manner. He not only

[1] Other works by Patte are "Discours sur l'Architecture," Paris, 1754; "Études d'Architecture," etc., Paris, 1755; "Description du Théatre de Vicenze en Italie, Chef d'Œuvre de Palladio," 1780; "Essai sur l'Architecture Théatrale," 1782. Bauchal says that Patte engraved some plates of architecture in the manner of Piranesi, but I have not come across these.

[2] The illustrations were published in three separate volumes, a most inconvenient arrangement—vol. vii in 1771 for vols. i and ii of text; vol. viii in 1773 for vols. iii and iv, and vol. ix in 1777 for vols. v and vi.

[3] Vol. i, "Avis de l'Editeur," p. 5.

[4] In the preface to vol. v, page ix, Patte says that Blondel adopted this anonymous method in order that he might have greater freedom in expressing his views. Had his name appeared as author he would have had to put the title of Academician after it, and this would have involved his submitting his work to the Academy. Article XXI of the Constitution of the Academy of Architecture laid it down that no Academician should

edited the MSS., but contributed a considerable part of the fifth and sixth volumes, more especially the lectures on construction, for which Blondel had only left some inadequate notes, and in which, in fact, he was not particularly interested. In addition to this it seems that Patte must have arranged most of the illustrations. There are no drawings by Blondel in vols. vii and viii, though in vol. ix Patte used a few beautiful drawings by Blondel for candelabra, grilles, ceilings, and internal decorations which had probably been made at least thirty [1] years before the issue of this volume. Patte was himself an accomplished draughtsman and engraver. His illustrations to his "Monumens" are without exception admirable, and, as I shall show in the following chapter, this book is the authority for French town-planning in the eighteenth century. Patte was profoundly impressed with the achievement of French architects. "Jamais le vrai goût de l'architecture antique n'a été aussi général . . . Les anciens, a force de nous servir de modèles, ont formé des élèves qui ont égalé leurs maîtres, et qui les ont même quelque fois surpassés." The eighteenth century had no false modesty, and there is no trace of it in Patte's extremely interesting summary of the state of the arts and sciences in France in the reign of Louis XV. He then proceeds to a description of the various schemes of public improvement carried out in honour of Louis XV, culminating in an account of the great competition for the Place Louis XV and Gabriel's designs. Patte wrote in a clear, straightforward style, without any attempt at eloquence, but in his final chapter, "des embellissemens de Paris," he lets himself go in a scheme of his own invention. Having pointed out the numerous defects of the city of Paris as it was, he concludes: "Let us throw the reins on the neck of our imagination. Let us dream what might be done." He certainly dreamt with a vengeance. He took as his text the Ile de la Cité, and his idea was to clear the whole of it except Nôtre Dame and Boffrand's Hospital for Foundlings, to join up the Ile de la Cité to the Ile S. Louis, and form a market place on the junction, apparently borrowing this idea from Soufflot. At the east end of the island he suggested a grand Place overlooking the river, with the statue of Henri IV removed from its position by the Pont Neuf. Nôtre Dame itself was to be preserved as

publish any work in architecture, under his name as Academician, unless such work had been previously read to the Academy, or examined by a committee appointed for the purpose, and had received the approval of the company.

[1] Pl. xvi, vol. ix, by Le Roy, after Blondel, reproduces exactly Blondel's own plate 57 of the "Maisons de Plaisance," published in 1738.

a parish church, and a vast new cathedral built at the west end on the site of the Place Dauphine. This new cathedral was to be raised on a continuous stylobate reached by a grand flight of twenty steps, and though it was to be on the familiar cruciform plan, it was to be surrounded by a peristyle of columns three deep, in order that the plan demanded by the Church might be combined with the external magnificence of the ancient temples. The statue of Louis XV was to stand opposite the west end, and on the further side of the Pont Neuf a fountain was to take the place of the statue of Henri IV, the Samaritaine was to be cleared away, and the bridges adorned with bronze statues of the great men of France. On the north side of the river he proposed to form a great Place on the east side of the Louvre from the Rue du Rouille up to the east front, with an obelisk in the centre. S. Germain l'Auxerrois was to share the fate of the Samaritaine, and a new S. Germain was to be built on the south-east corner of the Place on a circular plan. He proposed to extend the Pont Neuf southwards, cutting away a great salient of the south bank, so that the length to south of the new fountain was equal to that on the north of it, and on the south side of the river he proposed a new Place to correspond with that on the north side, the south side of which was to be occupied by a new Hôtel de Ville, with a Parliament House, Chambre de Comptes, Law Courts, and Châtelet on the east and west sides. It was indeed a heroic scheme. Patte advanced plausible arguments to show that it was practicable, but the scheme was altogether too enormous. Patte, moreover, did not belong to the official circle, and though a convert to the craze for the antique, he was never admitted to the particular clique of Quatremère de Quincy. He faded out of notice, and is said to have died at Mantes in 1812 or 1814, a thoughtful and capable man, who seems to have had less than justice done to his considerable abilities.

We have, in fact, reached the breaking point of the great French tradition, and perhaps Richard Mique, the architect first of Stanislas at Nancy and afterwards of Marie Antoinette, is typical of the parting of the ways. Mique, who was born at Nancy in 1728, appears to have been the son of a builder in that town, extensively employed on the buildings designed by Héré for Stanislas. In the accounts of that Prince's expenditure at Nancy, "Le Sieur Mique" appears as contractor for masonry for the hotels on both the east and west sides of the Place Stanislas and for the Palais de L'Intendance at the north end of

la Carrière, for which he was paid 527,208 francs 4 sous 10 deniers.[1] Bauchal says that the designs for this were given by Richard Mique about 1756 on his return from Blondel's school in Paris, but the building was designed by Héré and not by the younger Mique, and Bauchal is wrong in assigning the Porte Stanislas and the Porte S. Catherine to Mique's design in 1762. The sites for these archways were bought in 1752 and the entries of cost of their construction range from June 1755 to January 1759.[2] Neither of the Miques had anything to do with their design or construction, nor is there any reference to a Mique in the accounts except Mique the mason. I find, however, in a supplementary account, dated 20 May, 1759, reference to a certificate for payment given by M. Mique[3] and in that year he is said by Bauchal to have been appointed secretary to Stanislas, who ennobled him in 1761 with the title of the Seigneur d'Heillecourt and appointed him engineer-in-chief of the provinces of Bar and Lorraine in 1762. On the death of Héré in 1763 he succeeded him as Director-General of Buildings to Stanislas, and he was made a Chevalier of the Order of S. Michael by Louis XV. Stanislas died in 1766; and his death terminated Mique's career at Nancy. He returned to Paris, and was appointed Intendant and Controller-General of Buildings and gardens to Marie Antoinette, and in 1775 succeeded Gabriel as "premier architecte" of Louis XVI. In this same year he was elected to the Academy, and was employed on various works at Versailles, the Petit Trianon, S. Cloud and Fontainebleau, down to the outbreak of the Revolution. He was, of course, identified with the Royal Party, and he suffered for his loyalty. On 7 July 1794 Mique and his son were condemned to death as having been privy to the conspiracy to save the queen, and both were executed on the following day. Mique belonged to the new school of the revived antique as much as to the school of the old regime. He was not a very great artist, but his tragic death entitles him to remembrance in the uneventful annals of architecture.

[1] "Compte Général de la Dépense pour l'embellissement de la Ville de Nancy depuis 1751 jusqu'en 1759." Luneville, 1761. See p. 96 and note.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 127.

CHAPTER XXVIII

French Architecture in the Reign of Louis XV

IT is remarkable that though in the eighteenth century architecture was regarded in France as the art *par excellence*, not very much building was actually carried out, certainly not so much as in England in the same period, or in France throughout the whole of the seventeenth century. Architects, on the other hand, were held in high esteem, and the tradition of the pre-eminence of architecture in the arts established by J. H. Mansart was carried on by De Cotte, and lasted, though with ever-diminishing range, almost down to the Revolution. It is true that Mansart's abuse of his position had convinced the King that it was dangerous to concentrate despotic control of the arts in the hands of one man, and after Mansart's death the post of *Surintendant* was abolished, or rather broken up into separate departments, viz., that of the "Directeur general des bâtiments, jardins, arts et manufactures de S.M.",[1] in fact a Minister of Fine Arts with a salary of 35,200 francs per annum, and an executive department, dealing with the design and execution of the Royal Buildings, and directed by the "premier architecte du Roi" with a salary of 12,000 francs per annum. The immense powers wielded by Mansart passed into the hands of the governing class, of men such as the Marquis (afterwards Duc) D'Antin, Philibert Orry, Lenormant de Tournehem, and his nephew Marigny. Though, however, they had lost their place of pride, the most powerful men among the artists were to be found, not in the ranks of the painters or sculptors, but among the architects, Robert de Cotte, Boffrand, the elder and younger Gabriel,

[1] D'Antin is so called for the first time in 1709, the year after Mansart's death ("Comptes," v, 394). De Cotte, who was "premier architecte," combined with it other appointments that nearly doubled his salary. All the officials, including all the members of the Academy of Architecture, were officers of state, subject to the control of the Director-General, without whose permission they were not permitted to leave the country. De Cotte, Boffrand and others who worked for foreign princes were technically lent.

and Soufflot. Writers of the time from Daviler to Blondel and Patte took this commanding position for granted, and the Royal assent is shown by the constant bestowal of titles and of the Order of S. Michael on prominent French architects in the reign both of Louis XIV and Louis XV.[1] François Blondel was Seigneur de Croisette et Guillardon. Mansart was created Comte de Sagon, and in 1702 S. A. le Duc de Bourbon "desirant gratifier le Sieur Mansart et lui donner des marques de l'estime et de la considération qu'elle a pour lui" conferred on him all the seigneurial rights of the parishes of Veudre and Chateau-Mornay sur Allier.[2] Both Mansart and Le Nôtre were Chevaliers of the order of S. Michel. That honour was also conferred on De Cotte, L'Assurance, father and son,[3] on Jacques Jules Gabriel, and on Soufflot. It was not conferred on Ange Jacques Gabriel probably on account of the personal emnity of Marigny.

The same recognition was extended to architects by their colleagues. The Academy of Painting and Sculpture included architects in the class of "honoraire amateur," *e.g.*, Desgodetz (1694), De Cotte (1699), Jacques Gabriel (1700), Pierre Lambert (1702), Jean François Blondel (1705), Desjardins (1709), De Cotte *fils* (1710), and Ange Jacques Gabriel (1742). Servandoni[4] was elected a full member; Soufflot was elected an "associé libre" in 1760; Charles de Wailly an ordinary member in 1771.[5] Mansart as *Surintendant* was protector of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, De Cotte succeeded him as Vice-Protector, and in 1747 the King himself became "Protecteur immédiat de l'Académie."[6] I do not find that the Academy of Architecture made any attempt to return the compliment paid them by their colleagues of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, and indeed the two Academies appear to have kept singularly aloof from each other throughout their whole history. Yet in spite of the consideration in which the art was held, relatively speaking, few important private houses were built and not many churches. The chief architectural effort of the eighteenth

[1] See "Lettres de Noblesse et décorations accordées aux artistes en France pendant le XVII^e^ et le XVIII^e^ siècles," by J. J. Guiffrey.

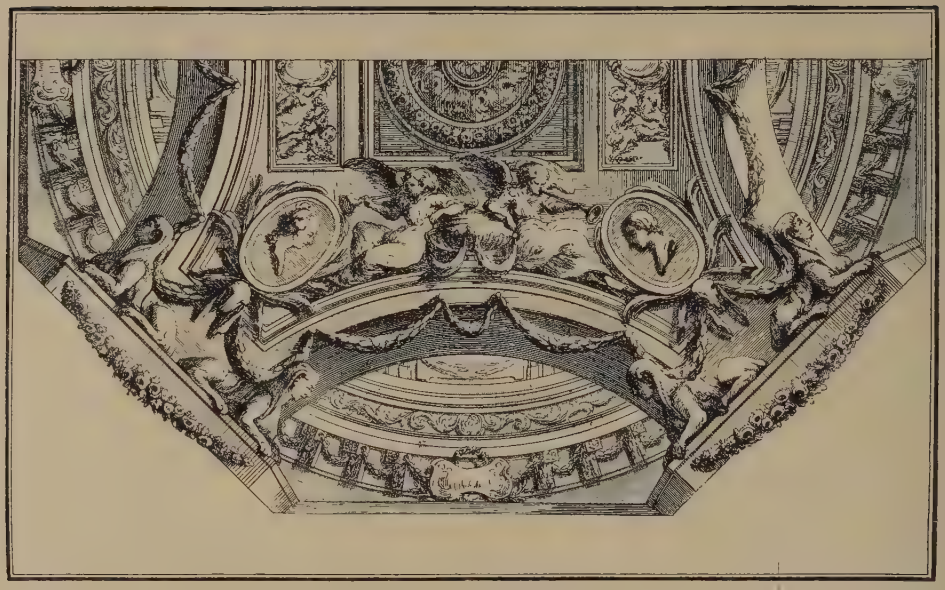
[2] See "Nouvelles Archives," 1882, iii, 131-4. This Duc de Bourbon was afterwards Minister of Louis XV, and built the stables of Chantilly.

[3] Blondel, "Arch. Fran.," i, 233, says several other architects as well were made Chevaliers of the Order of S. Michael.

[4] Servandoni was admitted as a painter. He was never elected a member of the Academy of Architects.

[5] De Wailly became a member of the Academy of Architecture in 1767. See p. 131.

[6] "Archives de l'art Fran.," i, 402.



DESIGN FOR CEILING "DANS LE GOÛT ANTIQUE." BY J. F. BLONDEL

DESIGN FOR CEILING "DANS LE GOÛT MODERNE." BY J. F. BLONDEL AND P. PATTE (see p. 164)
(FROM J. F. BLONDEL, "COURS D'ARCHITECTURE," IX, v)

century was made in public buildings and town-planning, and some of the largest undertakings of the time were begun though very seldom completed by French architects for various foreign Potentates. "La plupart des souverains se sont empressés d'attirer dans leur états des architectes de notre nation."[1] The fact was that the builders of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had covered France with beautiful country houses, already in many cases much too big for their owners. The aristocracy and the upper classes were, with few exceptions, impoverished by the rate of living at the courts of Louis XIV and the Regent Orléans. Here and there an owner of great wealth, such as the Duc de Bourbon, still further enriched by successful speculations not far removed from sharp practice,[2] might spend fabulous sums on the stables of Chantilly, or the King's mistresses, Mme. du Pompadour or Mme. du Barry, might wheedle the King into granting monstrous sums for their buildings and decorations, but many people were ruined by Law's operations, and the fashion for building set by Louis XIV had died out. Moreover, the upper classes, and what would now be described as "society," were wholly absorbed in the life of the court at Versailles and the Royal Houses, and after the middle of the eighteenth century in Paris itself, with its Salons, its active intellectual interests, its abundant amusements for those who had the means to enjoy them. Montesquieu's affection for his country place was a rare exception among the intellectuals of Paris.

On the other hand, a good deal of building went on in the provinces. Cities such as Bordeaux, Nantes and Rennes are full of fine eighteenth century houses, much on the lines of the hotels in Paris, though on a less ambitious scale, and in quiet little towns, such as Valognes in Normandy, there may still be found attractive provincial versions of the various phases of design that followed one another in the capital. The Hôtel Seneçé at Macon or the Hôtel de Beaumont at Valognes are instances. The latter with its curved frontispiece, its delicate iron work and the masks on its key blocks suggests the influence of the elder

[1] Patte, "Monumens," p. 7. He gives the following list of architects in foreign service: at Peterbourg, M. la Mothe; Berlin, M. de Geay; Copenhagen, M. Jardin; Munich, M. Cuvilliers; Stutgard, M. La Guépiere; Manheim, M. Pigage; Madrid, M. Marquet; Parma, M. Petitot; Patte himself was in the service of the Prince de Deux-Ponts. See also Dussieux, "Les artistes Français à l'Étranger."

[2] In 1720 he is said to have withdrawn 20 million livres in cash a few days before the final catastrophe of Law's system, and it was the action of persons such as the Duc de Bourbon that did much to bring about the collapse of the system. French authorities think that had Law had a fair chance he might have succeeded.

Gabriel. On the whole, however, little private building was done as compared with the two preceding centuries. On the other hand, a determined effort was made to increase the comfort and convenience of existing houses, and to adapt them to altered schemes of life, not only in their decorations but in their plans. Blondel complained that whereas the seventeenth century men had thought only of the outside, his contemporaries thought only of the inside; and it was certainly true that the exterior of town houses became plainer and plainer, till they finally settled down into those blank dispiriting façades which seem to have remained stereotyped in Paris for the last 150 years. Sometimes in earlier work they are redeemed by some graceful iron balcony and a dignified entrance. But nobody took any interest in the outside of houses. It was as if the owners desired to attract as little attention as possible, reserving all their resources for themselves and their friends inside, a not unnatural proceeding in view of the promiscuous habits of the eighteenth century. "Intus ut libet, foris ut moris est."

The change in internal planning is usually said to have begun with the Palais Bourbon in 1722. Patte in his survey of the reign of Louis XV says that "l'art de la distribution des bâtiments"[1] was the most characteristic development of architecture in the reign of Louis XV. Hitherto, he continues, architecture had been nothing but a mask. Everything had been sacrificed to the magnificence of the exterior; architects produced vast and comfortless interiors, rooms two-storeys high, enormous ball-rooms, galleries of interminable length, staircases of dangerous width—no separate access, everything for show. Such were the principal features of the great seventeenth-century houses. "L'on ignoroit l'art de se loger commodément et pour soi." There was a good deal of truth in this summary. Such a thing as private and intimate life scarcely existed in the reign of Louis XIV, and the ostentation of that reign had the result of making his grandson shirk every public appearance and ceremonial that he could possibly avoid. The peculiar morals of the Regency also gave ample opportunity for the skill of the house planner. The provision of private staircases, service stairs and passages, their adequate lighting, the convenient planning of kitchens and offices, were considered not less important than the scheming of vistas, and Blondel in his "Maisons de Plaisance" goes into minute details as to the working arrangements of private houses. Several of the royal houses had lifts for the service of suppers to the select private parties of the King or the Regent in order to dispense with the presence of attendants. Patte

[1] "Monumens érigés," etc., pp. 5-6.

mentions a patent reversible fireplace which having warmed one room could be turned round to warm the room on the other side of the wall, and indeed a promising intrigue between Mme. de la Popelinière and the notorious Duc de Richelieu was nipped in the bud in consequence of M. de la Popelinière having discovered that the chimney-piece of Madame's room gave immediate access to that of the Duc. Patte mentions le Carpentier, Contant, and Cartaud as especially skilful planners, and Cartaud, now almost forgotten, was considered one of the ablest men of his time by his contemporaries. To these names one might add that of the elder L'Assurance, who designed the plans of the Hôtel de Lassay[1] in the grounds of the Palais Bourbon and the Palais itself. The plans of both these houses were very complete and carefully thought out, on the principle of private suites of rooms in addition to the reception rooms. The Palais Bourbon had its bathroom and its heating chamber, and passages top-lit as well as from the sides, and the plan of the Hôtel de Lassay, with a few modifications, would make an excellent one-story house. Where Mansart had spent immense sums on completely uncomfortable buildings, his successors did all they could to give their clients houses they could live in. The plans of the Hôtel de Matignon[2] and the Hôtel de Janvry[3] show the advance in house-planning on the methods of Louis XIV. The Hôtel de Matignon was begun in 1721 from the designs of Courtonne and was considered one of the finest hotels of the time in Paris. I have already pointed out the skilful distribution of the site which allowed a forecourt of adequate size for the house, and also a symmetrical elevation. The kitchen offices, instead of being at the opposite end of the ground, were conveniently arranged in a court of their own close to the *salle-à-manger*, and all the rooms were properly lit. Courtonne provided a grand staircase but he supplemented this by several little service stairs, and the only fault of his plan is that the dining room was a passage room, and five of the principal rooms were only accessible through each other, a detail which the architects of that time seem to have regarded with indifference. The plan was a great advance on the single thickness plans of Le Muet, such as the Hôtel de Luynes (Rue S. Dominique) of seventy years before, or the very feeble plan of the Hôtel de Ludes in the same street built from the designs of Robert de Cotte in 1710,[4] a plan which com-

[1] For plan of the Hôtel de Lassay and the Hôtel de Bourbon see chap. xviii.
[2] For the ground plan of the Hôtel de Matignon, see chap. xxi.
[3] Rue de Varennes. See chap. xxi.
[4] Blondel, "Arch. Fran.," i, 254.

bines nearly every fault possible in a plan of this sort. L'Assurance himself in his plans of the Hôtel d'Auvergne (1708) and the Hôtel de Maisons (1708, Rue de l'Université) though feeling his way to better things was still immature, and did not show his grasp of the new methods of planning[1] till the last year of his life in the Hôtel de Lassay. The Hôtel de Janvry was built in 1732-33 from designs by Cartaud, and the advance made in the ten years is remarkable. Except for the persistent habit of treating the dining room as a passage room, the plan of this house for the site is open to very little criticism. Small internal courts are provided for light and air. The grand staircase is done away with, and replaced by two inconsiderable stairs in the wings to right and left with direct approaches from the entrance vestibule. On the first floor, almost for the first time, a central and a side corridor for access to bedrooms and service was provided, and both of them were properly lit. Except that the servants were stuffed away into the entresol, seven feet high, between the stables and the hay lofts, the house would be a workable modern house, and no further important developments in house-planning were evolved in the rest of the eighteenth century.

Side by side with this insistence on comfort and convenience in planning came a complete change in the methods of internal decorations. The stately decorations of Le Brun and Mansart, fine as they were in the great rooms and staircases of a royal palace, were unsuitable for the "vie intime" of forty years later. Their vast mouldings and heroic paintings were out of scale with the rooms, heavy and oppressive in effect, costly to maintain, and out of touch with the cheerful and irresponsible life of the first half of the eighteenth century, when the spending classes cared nothing at all for the heroic and a very great deal for the movement and gaiety of life. Their whole object seems to have been to break loose from restraint of any sort, and the instinct is seen at work in the decorations of the time, when everything runs into everything else, and the definite boundary line is avoided, at all costs. Instead of squaring up his lines the "ébéniste" and the plasterer resolutely turned them off into some queer unexpected twirligig. Patte again gives an excellent summary of the change.[2] In place of the ponderous ornament with which the buildings of Louis XIV were overloaded, the fashion insisted on all sorts of lighter decorations, "pleines de goût, variés de mille façons diverses."

[1] The Hôtel de Maisons had to be entirely rearranged by Mouret when the property changed hands a few years later.

[2] "Monumens," p. 6.

The beams of floors were no longer shown, and were concealed by ornamental ceilings, decorated with "frises et de toutes sortes d'ornemens agréables." Instead of the pictures or enormous bas-reliefs which used to be placed over mantelpieces, mirrors were placed there, "qui par leurs répétitions avec celles qu'on leur oppose, forment des tableaux mouvans qui grandissent et ornement les appartements, et leur donnent un air de gaieté et de magnificence." This last change was introduced by De Cotte, and though it reached its final stage of vulgarity in the hotels and lodging houses of the last century, mirrors framed in fanciful mouldings, carved and gilt, were used with excellent effect in the eighteenth century, when colour was far more vivid than we can realize to-day, when flowered silks and satins were worn by every one, and beautiful dress was not confined to women. In appreciating such decorations as those of the Hôtel de Soubise, one has to clear one's mind entirely of the associations of modern evening dress, which makes one man look like another, and wipes out half the company, so far as regards the scheme of decoration as a whole. In the eighteenth century dress, decoration and furniture were regarded not as things apart, such as a cabinet in a museum, or a picture in a gallery, to be considered solely with reference to their individual and isolated merits, but as integral parts of a complete scheme of decoration, to which the architecture of the room, its decoration, its furniture, and the dresses of its inmates all contributed their several shares. The artists of the eighteenth century relied on an "ensemble" and cumulative effect of which one can now form little idea from the specimens of eighteenth century furniture, however beautiful, exhibited in museums, and divorced from their right environment. The gibes that have been levelled at the art of the eighteenth century are wide of the mark, because they assume an intention of serious and moral purpose which never existed. With all its faults that art at least showed a joy in life, absolutely lacking in the preciosities and affectations of Percier and Fontaine. I fancy that Blondel, in his zeal for pure architecture, missed the point. He inveighs against those who were indifferent to "un édifice regulier où l'architecture étale ses beautés, et l'architecte ses resources,"[1] and who decorated their rooms, great and small alike, with "arabesques, bambochades, ou les somptueux colifichets, qu'un luxe ingénieux, mais tout a fait deraisonable, a substitués au vrai genre et à une élégance interessante." Oppenord and Meissonnier had undoubtedly run the "colifichet" to a standstill, but for the matter of that there are some

[1] Blondel, "Cours," iii, 62, 63.

deplorable "bambochades" and "colifichets" in Blondel's own designs, and though this manner now seems trite and meaningless, any critical estimate of it should take into account the conditions for which it was devised and under which it was used. In Piganiol de la Force's description of the environs of Paris there is an attractive account of the gallery of Belle-vue,[1] the designs of which, he says, were made by Mme. du Pompadour herself. The panelling was decorated with garlands of flowers, "travaillées avec la plus grande legèreté par M. Verbeck (Verbeckt)," and painted by Dinant and Dutout. Within these garlands were pictures by Boucher. The hangings and coverings of the furniture were painted by M. Pernst with scenes and attributes of agriculture, "une imagination delicate, guidée par le goût et par les graces en a réglé toute l'ordonnance."[2] The French decorators of the eighteenth century take an important place in the art of their time. J. C. Delafosse, who called himself "architecte-décorateur," was an able artist, De la Londe, "plus fin, et plus spirituel" was a refined if rather weak designer, and Verbeck's decorations at Versailles, accomplished but ineffective, seem the reflex of that worn out aristocracy that failed so disastrously at the French Revolution. Enthusiastic claims have been made for Mme. du Pompadour and even for Mme. du Barry by their admirers, that French architecture owed much to these beautiful ladies. They led the fashion in bric-à-brac, decoration, and dress, but their influence on architecture was neither more nor less than that of any other fashionable lady who affects the arts, and was in point of fact a negligible quantity. During the last illness of Mme. du Pompadour, Van Loo painted a grand allegorical picture entitled "Les arts suppliants," the arts imploring Destiny to spare her life. "Les Suppliants de Van Loo," says Diderot, "n'obtinrent rien du Destin, plus favorable à la France qu'aux arts. Mme. du Pompadour mourut . . . eh bien, qu'est il resté de cette femme, qui nous a épuisés d'hommes et d'argent, laissés sans honneur et sans énergie, et qui a bouleversé le système politique de l'Europe? Le traité de Versailles qui durera ce qu'il pourra: L'Amour de Bouchardon qu'on admirera à jamais: quelques pierres gravées de Guay, qui étonneront les antiquaires à venir; un bon petit tableau de Van Loo qu'on regardera quelquefois; et une pincée de cendres."[3] Great movements in art are

[1] Near Meudon. Now destroyed.

[2] Piganiol de la Force says this of the gardens, of which he also says, "Tout est de roses dans les jardins" ("Desc.," ix, 45).

[3] "Salon de 1765," p. 246, ed. J. Assézat.

not brought about by the whims and caprices of society, but by profounder causes. The old regime was breaking up throughout the eighteenth century, and in architecture its downfall was hastened by the doctrinaires. The cult of the antique, formidable and pedantic, was already looming in the distance. For the last thirty years or more the Comte de Caylus from his chair as "honoraire amateur," had been bombarding the Academy of Painting and Sculpture with his false aesthetic and sham archaeology. Quatremère de Quincy was already girding on his armour for a systematic onslaught on all that was vital in French art. That fragile, delicate art was already doomed to extinction, and scarcely lasted out the old regime.

In church building, relatively speaking, little was done in the eighteenth century. The last great efforts of the seventeenth century, Mansart's Church of the Invalides and the Chapel of Versailles, were completed before the death of Louis XIV, and it is only fair to say that in both these buildings Mansart or his associates broke away from the Italian model, and showed that French architects had little to learn from Italy in the way of church architecture.[1] At this date both French and Italian architects had the whole vocabulary of classic at their fingers' ends, but the logical sense of the Frenchman saved him from tormenting his design into the eccentricities of the seventeenth-century Italian.[2] Unfortunately, Mansart had exhausted the resources of the State, and Paris already had sufficient churches. Indeed, Blondel thought that some of them might be scrapped, and the parishes pooled in order to make way for a gigantic "paroisse" such as he had designed himself. Churches such as that of the Petits Pères were completed, and undertakings long delayed, such as that of S. Sulpice, carried forward. In the provinces, the cathedral church of Nancy dates from the early part of the eighteenth century, and the church of Bonsecours at Nancy was built from designs by Héré. At Etival[3] (Vosges) an ambitious design to complete the west front of the Abbey Church with two towers early in the eighteenth century was left unfinished. At La Rochelle the elder Gabriel and his son, Ange

[1] How small their debt was can be seen by a reference to the designs in J. J. de Rubeis' "Insignium Romæ templorum prospectus exteriores interioresque," etc. Rome, 1684.

[2] Mansart made some experiments in detail in the organ gallery and western front of the Paroisse at Versailles (1681-6). In the gallery of the Chapel at Versailles, for the first time in France, he used isolated columns instead of piers to carry his vaulting.

[3] The North Tower was completed in four storeys of orders above orders, beginning with an Ionic order. A late example of orders above orders.

Jacques, designed and partly completed the fine cathedral, and Contant began the great church at Arras, Oppenord's rococo at S. Sulpice was only a passing fashion. Servandoni brought back design to severer models in the Doric order of the west front, and both at Arras and in the original design for the Madeleine, Contant had introduced new features in the piers of the central dome and the isolated columns, a timid and tentative approach to the new manner of the antique, but it was Soufflot who first crossed the Rubicon, and endeavoured to translate the plan and general scheme of a Christian church into terms of an antique Roman temple. He failed to satisfy the formalists, but the Panthéon was regarded by his contemporaries as a revolution in design, the signal for the abandonment of the tradition of church design that had held in France for the last 150 years, and the day was not far off when, at Napoleon's bidding, the Madeleine was to be transformed into a classical temple dedicated to the valour of his veterans.

Strangely enough, having regard to the personality of the King, the most important architectural work of the eighteenth century in France is to be found in its public buildings. Louis XIV was full of zeal for his country, but as he identified his country with himself and personally directed its affairs, he satisfied his zeal for the State and the arts of France by building himself interminable and extremely costly royal houses. One can count on one's fingers the public improvements made by Louis XIV during his long reign. The Hôpital de la Salpêtrière, the laying out of the Bastion of S. Antoine and the Quai Le Pelletier, the Invalides, and the Place des Victoires (carried out at the expense of the Maréchal de la Feuillade), and the Place Vendôme, generously presented to the citizens of Paris by the King on condition that they built him a barrack for his musketeers in the Faubourg S. Antoine.[1] The large building of S. Cyr, designed by Mansart, near Versailles, was built at the King's expense, but the institution was a semi-private affair of Mme. de Maintenon.[2] With the exception of the

[1] The cost of this vast building was so great that it nearly ruined the city, and they had to sell the site as best they could.

[2] The Maison de Saint Cyr was founded by the King at the suggestion of Mme. de Maintenon and the Père de la Chaise, for the education and maintenance of 250 daughters of noble families without means. The pensionnaires had to show four generations of noble descent on the father's side. The building was begun in May 1685, 2,500 men, including soldiers, were employed on it, and it was completed by May 1686 at a cost of 1,400,000 livres. "Cette maison fut meublée avec une magnificence Royale, tout étoit

ENTRANCE TO LYCÉE CORNEILLE, ROUEN (see p. 170)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

Invalides, and the Salpêtrière, the rare public works undertaken by Louis XIV seem to have been prompted by a craze for magnificence, and even Colbert could not keep him to the point. His grandson, Louis XV, was a selfish and indolent person, who only asked to be left alone to enjoy himself with his horses, his hounds, and his mistresses, and yet during his reign more was done to improve civil architecture than had been attempted since the days of Henri IV. The explanation was that Louis XV had some very capable ministers and left the matter to them. Such men as Fleury, his Prime Minister, Orry, the Controller-General, Trudaine, Director of Ponts et Chaussées, Turgot, and Tourny, Intendant of Guienne, were able administrators, some of whom foresaw the dangers into which France was drifting. Moreover, the Directors-General of Buildings, Arts, and Manufactures, D'Antin in particular, de Tournehem and Marigny, seem on the whole to have used their wide powers with sagacity and reasonable public spirit. Ministers must have felt the necessity of making some attempt at work in the public interest,[1] and as I shall show in the next chapter some first-rate improvements were actually carried out in important cities in France. Municipal enterprise was stimulated, and in the provinces more than in Paris it was realized that the resources of the State should be expended in the public interest, and not merely in gratifying the personal caprices of the King. As the result of this awakened spirit, we find many admirable buildings erected in France at the end of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century, for educational or other public purposes.

The large conventual establishments built in the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV are some of the most remarkable buildings of their time. Many of these have since been converted into Lycées, hospitals, and even factories. The famous Abbey of Ourscamp, near Noyon, built in the reign of Louis XIV is now used as a cotton factory. The English College of the Jesuits at St. Omer, rebuilt in great part after a fire in

neuf, bien choisi, bien fait, bien commode: La Sacristie, le Roberie, la Lingerie, les Classes, les Dortoirs, les Cellules, les Infirmeries, l'Apothécaire et les Cuisines furent garnies de toutes les choses convenables" (P. de la Force, "Nouvelle Desc.," ix, 380). Each pensionary on leaving was given a dot of 1,000 écus. Piganiol de la Force gives the length of the façade as 648 feet. Mdme. de Maintenon died here in 1719. It was turned into a hospital at the Revolution, and into a military school by Napoleon. About 400 officers are trained here.

[1] The criticism of Paris Duverney on Gabriel's first design for the École Militaire is significant: "Il s'agit moins d'élever un édifice à la gloire du Roi, que d'en former un qui soit utile à l'État" (p. 159).

1826, is now occupied as a military hospital.[1] Most of the large French towns possess one or more of these excellent buildings, simple and dignified in design, and impressive in their suggestion of a disciplined life, and of a system intended to be permanent and immutable. Among the most remarkable are the Abbaye Aux Dames, now the Hospital, and the Lycée Malherbe at Caen, built in 1704 for the Abbey of S. Etienne, from the designs of one of the brethren, Guillaume de la Tremblaye.[2] The details are simple and excellent throughout, and the refectory is one of the best rooms of its kind in France. The present Hôtel de Ville of Caen was originally a seminary of the Eudists built in 1691-1703. It is a large building, but architecturally inferior to the converted buildings of S. Etienne. The College of Avranches is a good example on a less ambitious scale. At Tours there is the Palais de Commerce, said to have been designed by J. H. Mansart, and the admirable Prefecture, both dating from the early part of the eighteenth century. The latter building was originally a Convent of the Visitation. I am unable to ascertain who was the architect, or its exact date, but it is a very attractive design with its splendid grille, its garden of magnolias, and the fine treatment of its colossal order, supporting a plain attic storey. There is no ornamental detail, but its spaciousness and dignity bear out Blondel's favourite thesis, that architecture needs no more than the adequate expression of purposes and sound proportion to justify itself. The Lycée Corneille at Rouen is another example of a converted building. It was begun by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, and the chapel, to which I have referred in an earlier volume,[3] was begun in 1610 and not completed till 1704. The entrance gateway is a characteristic example of the earlier part of the reign of Louis XV, but again the name of the designer is unknown. The Jesuits were great builders. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) gave a considerable impetus to their energies, and during the next fifty years, and indeed down to the date of their expulsion from France in 1764,[4]

[1] Hospitals, however, were built in the seventeenth century, *e.g.*, the Salpêtrière and L'Hôpital S. Jacques at Besançon, 1685-1702.

[2] "Caen," par G. S. Trébutien, p. 169.

[3] "A History of French Architecture, 1494-1661," ii, 25.

[4] See "Hist. de France," ed. Lavisse, viii, ii, 320-21, for an account of the curious way in which they were made bankrupt and ruined. All Jesuit Colleges, pensions, or seminaries were closed in 1762. In 1764 the Jesuits were expelled from France and the Parliament took possession of their buildings. A catalogue printed at Rome in 1679 gave the number of their colleges at that date as 578, seminaries 88, and "maisons de probation" 48 (Germain Brice, "Desc. de la Ville de Paris," ii, 187).

they were extremely active and reared their vast establishments in every part of France, one might almost say of Europe. Louis XIV for the last forty years of his reign was in the hands of the Jesuits, and they were not the men to miss their opportunities, though to do them justice they used them largely to extend their system of education. Many of the buildings now occupied as Lycées were due to the enterprise of the Jesuits, and the plain straightforward character of their architecture, and its suitability to purpose, make them in their way models of practical design. The same quality is shown in some of the eighteenth-century barracks—the Caserne Condé at Bourges, the Quartier Rochambeau at Vendôme, or the Caserne Hamelin at Caen. There is no pretension about these buildings, and little or no ornament, and yet they are singularly impressive in their self-restraint, their suggestion of masculine purpose well in hand, and perfectly competent to realize what it set out to do.

The Jesuits were not the only order who undertook this vast educational work. The priests of the Mission of Saint Lazare, as reorganized by S. Vincent de Paul, their first Superior-General,[1] devoted themselves to education and charitable works with a singleness of purpose unknown to the Jesuits. Germain Brice, writing early in the eighteenth century, says they had more than ninety seminaries at that date, and he mentions an interesting enterprise undertaken by the priests in 1719. They built on the road to S. Denis a long series of two-storeyed houses, solidly built of stone, to house private families and workmen, and in 1724 they put up the following advertisement at the corners of all the streets of Paris:

"Retraite Honneste et Chrétienne.—S'il se trouvoit plusieurs gens de bien, Ecclesiastiques ou Séculiers, qui desirent de vivre un peu a l'écart du grande monde, Les Prêtres de la Mission de Saint Lazare seroient assez disposez à leur procurer, à bon compte, près de leur Eglise, un logement sain et commode, un grande cour, un beau jardin, une maison de campagne et toutes les choses necessaires à la vie, tant en santé qu'en maladie."[2]

Blondel illustrates the entrance to the Seminary at Bourges built from designs of M. Franque,[3] "architecte du Roi" in 1740, designed

[1] Died 1660 at the age of 85.

[2] "Desc. de la Ville de Paris," ii, 13, 14.

[3] "Cet architecte du Roi est peut-etre un de ceux qui ont le plus travaillé, ses productions estimables vont paraitre incessamment" (J. F. Blondel, "Cours," iii, 143).

with the gravity of manner that distinguishes all these buildings. He also gives his own design, a very commonplace one, for the entrance to a palace for the Archbishop of Cambrai, and he illustrates a fine design by Bullet for the frontispiece of the archevêché of Bourges.[1]

I have already referred to some of these palatial buildings in my account of Boffrand and De Cotte. In the eighteenth century the chief building enterprise of the Established Church in France seems to have been the provision of lordly residences for the bishops and archbishops. There is an eighteenth century Archevêché at Besançon and a fine late example at Bordeaux, built for the archbishop, the Prince de Rohan de Guemenée, in 1772-81, from designs by D'Etienne.[2] Ten years later it was taken over by the State as l'Hôtel du Department, and in 1835 it became the Hôtel de Ville. The Archevêché near the cathedral at Tours is a comparatively modest building and of about the same date is the Evêché at Blois by the elder Gabriel. The Evêché of Arras, or Palais de S. Vaast, a large and important building, was designed by Contant d'Ivry after the middle of the eighteenth century, the Evêché of Lisieux, now the Tribunaux, was built for Monseigneur Leonor de Matignon about 1680, and that of Saint Omer, now the Palais de Justice, was completed from designs by J. H. Mansart about 1700.[3] To meet the cost of these great houses the princes of the church devastated the forests of their sees; and their action seems the more gratuitous in that they were seldom in residence, preferring the example of Cardinal Fleury, who described himself as "Evêque de Fréjus par l'indignation divine." Of public buildings erected in France during the two reigns the most remarkable are the Invalides, the Ecole Militaire, the Hotels[4] to right and left of the Rue Royale in the Place de la Concorde by A. J. Gabriel, the Hôtel de Ville of Dijon, the elder Gabriel's buildings at Bordeaux, Héré's at Nancy, and the Hospital at Lyons by Soufflot. Gabriel's original designs for the École Militaire were greatly reduced in execution, but the building is still one of the finest public monuments in France. Soufflot's Hôtel Dieu at Lyons was perhaps the most important work completed

[1] See illustrations, chap. x.

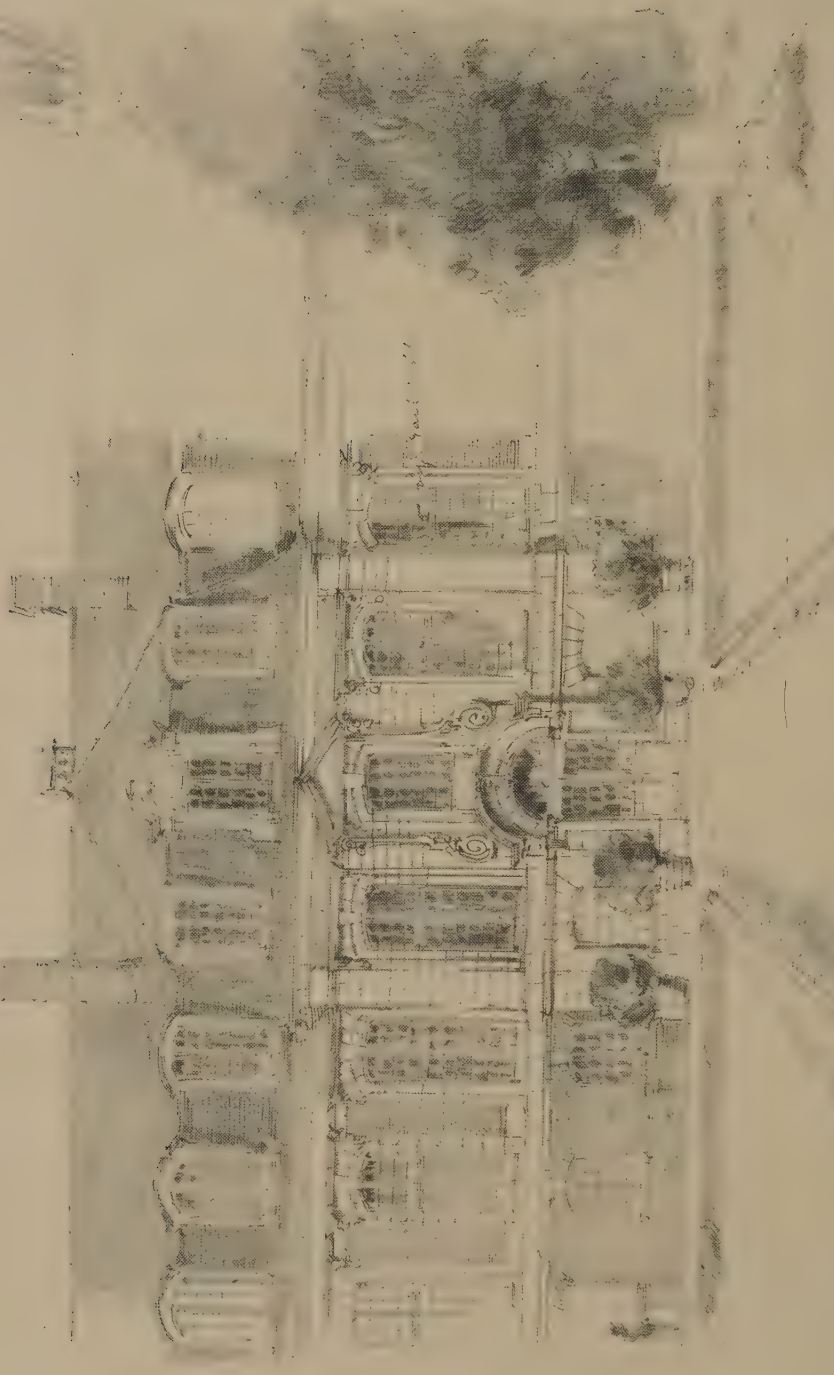
[2] See illustration in "Bordeaux—Extérieures et Intérieures du XVIII siècle," Charles Schmid ed.

[3] Altered 1843-5.

[4] The old Garde Meuble up to 1806. The hotel to the right is now occupied by the Ministry of Marine, that to the left has been cut up into four hotels.

DETAIL OF HÔTEL DE VILLE, ABBEVILLE, 1685 (see p. 173)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

[II. TO FACE P. 172



THE CARPET FACTORY, ABBEVILLE (p. 173)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

outside Paris, but a good deal of public building was going on in the provinces. The fine Hôtel de Ville of Dijon was begun from Mansart's designs soon after 1680 and completed by the elder Gabriel about 1738. There is a good Hôtel de Ville at Abbeville in brick and stone, dating from 1685, and a factory for the carpet works instituted there by Colbert, built a few years earlier, the designs of both of which are attributed to Mansart. At Aire (pas de Calais) the Hôtel de Ville (1714-24) has a colossal Corinthian order running through two storeys, with entablature and balustrade and an elaborate trophy in a gable over the frontispiece. Chateaudun and Auray possess small but excellent buildings of about the same date, and three important Town Halls, those of Toulouse, Nancy, and Beauvais, date from the middle of the eighteenth century. The Capitole of Toulouse was built between 1750 and 1753, from the designs of a local architect named Cammas,[1] and in its general "ordonnance," as Blondel would call it, is somewhat similar to Héré's Hôtel de Ville at Nancy, which was being built between 1755 and 1758. Both buildings have a rusticated ground storey, above which are pilasters running through two storeys and supporting an entablature and a balustrade. In both there is a frontispiece in the centre in three bays with a pediment, spoilt in both cases by the trophy (Toulouse) and the clock with great consoles (Nancy) above the pediment. But there are many variations in detail. The end pavilions are different. Cammas used an Ionic order, Héré a Composite order; and the Capitole is in red brick and stone, and altogether a more flamboyant affair than the Hôtel de Ville of Nancy, which is in stone. The Hôtel de Ville of Beauvais, built in 1752 from the designs of a certain Bayeux, has a heavy façade in nine bays with a central frontispiece and four bays on either side separated by colossal Ionic pilasters, with an entablature and balustrade. The motive of the colossal Ionic order with its entablature and balustrade was used by Ceineray ten years later in the Prefecture of Nantes with greater skill and success,[2] and still in the French traditional manner. On the whole, French architecture did well in the reign of Louis XV. It steadily advanced in practical accomplishment. Improved planning, admirable workmanship, skilful and amusing, if somewhat licentious, decoration, were its principal achievements, but on the rare occasions on which architects of commanding ability had their chance—such men

[1] Bauchal says he was both architect and painter.

[2] The Prefecture, Nantes, was built between 1763 and 1777. Nantes is a depressing place of sinister memories, and the Prefecture is one of its few redeeming features.

as both the Gabriels or Soufflot—they showed that they were fully capable of maintaining the great traditions of the seventeenth century. The disaster was due to the folly of the younger men who threw over that tradition and deserted to the camp of the pedants and the doctrinaires.

CHAPTER XXIX

Civic Architecture in the Reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV

THE subject of town-planning has attracted much attention in recent years, and it has sometimes been treated by enthusiasts as if it was a discovery of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Town-planning is, of course, no new thing. It was admirably handled by the Romans, by the Hellenistic architects, and, before them, by the Athenians. Indeed, in civilizations of remote antiquity there is evidence of the deliberate planning of cities, and it might be more accurate to say that the contribution of the nineteenth century was to add house to house and street to street, until our cities have become mere accumulations of buildings. France was, as usual in matters of architecture, ahead of other countries. The first serious and considered venture was made by Henry IV, in the Place Royal, the Place Dauphine, and the Porte et Place de France.[1] Little was done under Louis XIII or under Mazarin's administration, but Richelieu had his own little town of Richelieu designed from gateway to gateway by Lemercier, and it remains a unique example of a seventeenth-century town built from start to finish at one date and from one design, and for a definite purpose. Le Vau's general design for the "Collège des Quatre Nations," is, perhaps, the next example of planning on large lines and a comprehensive scheme. He placed the building on the axis line of the south entrance of the Louvre, and in designing his embankment and the plan of the building endeavoured not only to get over the difficulties of his site, but also to form a definite climax to the vista from the Louvre. All the designs for the completion of the Louvre itself, those of Le

[1] See "A History of French Architecture, 1494-1661," vol. ii, pp. 41-46. Also "The Mistress Art," chaps. v, vi, and vii.

Vau, Bernini, and Perrault, aimed at dealing in one way or another with the space between the old Louvre and the Tuileries. The clearance of this space had been a favourite project of Henri IV, and he actually built the gallery along the river front joining the two palaces, but nothing further came of these proposals. Louis XIV tired of the Louvre before the roofs were on, the building remained unfinished, and it is possible that the eclipse of Perrault's reputation in his latter days may have been partly due to the fact that no one could even see his splendid design of the east façade. The Place des Victoires and the Place Vendôme were important improvements, especially the Place Vendôme with its skilful treatment of the façades, but in both cases the designs were spoilt in execution. The only ground planning that really appealed to Louis XIV was that of the gigantic garden schemes prepared for him by Le Nôtre, and neither he nor his architects paid much attention to vistas of architecture. De Brosses, after commenting on the fine planning of the three streets converging on the Porta del Popolo at Rome, says: "Ce qu'on entend admirablement ici, c'est la manière de disposer les points de vue et de ménager le coup d'œil des objets singuliers. Cet art n'est pas l'article qui contribue le moins à donner à la ville cet air de grandeur et de magnificence. On ne l'entend point du tout a Paris. Il n'y a de coup d'œil que celui des quais. La Place Vendôme, la Place Royale, l'admirable façade du Louvre, et le portail Saint Gervais (deux monuments égaux à ce qu'on voit de plus beau ici), sont en pure perte pour la perspective."[1]

The Place des Victoires was constructed at the charge of the Maréchal Duc de La Feuillade, at a cost of 500,000 livres, the town contributing a similar amount.[2] The Place Vendôme was to have been a good deal bigger than it is, and was to have been entered by a great triumphal arch on the north side, and on the south side left open to the Rue S. Honoré, but the work was stopped on the death of Louvois in 1691, and the whole scheme altered to its present plan.[3] The equestrian monument of the King, "vêtu en héros de l'antiquité," by

[1] "Lettres Familières écrites d'Italie en 1739 et 1740," par Charles de Brosses, ii, p. 10. De Brosses modifies his criticism by pointing out that at Rome "tout est de palais ou de cabanes."

[2] Patte gives its diameter as 240 feet (40 toises). The monument by Desjardins was dedicated to Louis Le Grand in 1681. In the Place were four great "Fanaux," or lanterns on three marble columns. La Feuillade left a sum for their regilding every twenty-five years, but after his death they were given to the Theatins.

[3] Its dimensions are 450 feet long by 420 wide (Patte). The Place Royale (Place des Vosges) is 432 feet square.

Girardon, was put up in 1699 on a pedestal 30 feet high.[1] The only other public monuments of the reign in Paris were the "Arc de Triomphe du Trône" by Perrault, which was never completed, the alterations to the Porte S. Antoine, the Porte S. Denis, the Porte S. Martin, and the Porte S. Bernard. The bastion of S. Antoine was laid out as a Place and boulevard, and the Quai Le Pelletier was formed, running east from the Pont Notre Dame and returning northwards to the Place de Grêve, opposite the Hôtel de Ville.

In the provinces the Place de Louis le Grand (now Belle-cour) was laid out at Lyons, the fine Porte de Paris at Lille was built from the designs of an architect named Simon Volant in 1682, and the Porte du Peyrou at Montpellier in 1692, from the designs of D'Orbay and under the superintendance of Daviler.[2] Daviler is said to have designed the promenade de Peyrou, which was completed nearly one hundred years later by Giral and Dormat. The main Place in this Promenade is 175 metres by 125. On the west side, on the axis line, is a Château d'Eau, supplied by the aqueduct S. Clement, and beyond is a terrace commanding magnificent views. To the east a wide street, the Rue Nationale, continues on the axis line to the promenade de l'Esplanade, and thus a vista clean through the town is obtained, a most desirable feature wherever the size of the town admits of it, not only for architectural effect but for through ventilation. The French designers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were fully alive to this, and they had a great idea of running the main road right out into the country. At Orléans the entrance from the Place du Martroy, in the centre of the town, to the Rue Royale, is marked by two fine pavilions,[3] on either side, and from this point the street runs straight to the bridge across

[1] The site is now occupied by the Colonne Vendôme finished in 1810, thrown down by the Commune in 1871, and re-erected in 1874.

[2] See chap. xvii. Patte says that in 1716 a bronze equestrian figure of Louis XIV was put up opposite the archway. The figure was cast in Paris, and its transport to Montpellier was a remarkable feat. It was conveyed by river to Rouen, thence by sea to the Garonne, being wrecked on the way. From Bordeaux it was taken by the Garonne to Toulouse, thence by the Canal Royal through three lakes to the Canal du Ley, and thence on rollers to the site. It was finally lowered into the mortices of the pedestal by sailors.

[3] The one now occupied as a military Club was built in 1759 as the Chancellery of the Duchy of Orleans. J. F. Blondel ("Cours," vi, 184) says the bridge at Orléans was designed by Hupeau, chief engineer of the Ponts et Chaussées. It is 1,026 feet long, and has 9 elliptical arches, the centre arch is 112 feet diameter, and 37 feet 4 inches high. The total width out to out of parapet is 46 feet—with a carriage way 27 feet wide. He gives some interesting information as to its construction.

the Loire through the Faubourg S. Marceau, and so away into the open country. At Saumur the main street runs in a straight line through the town over the Pont Cessart,[1] through the Faubourg des Ponts, and crosses the Bras des Sept Voies[2] by the Pont Napoleon. At this point its effect is now spoilt by the station and the railway. Another splendid example is found at Tours. The main road, l'avenue de Grammont, enters the town on the south side across the River Cher, intersects nearly at right angles the Boulevard Béranger at the Place du Palais de Justice, nearly in the centre of the town, and continues in a straight line to the beautiful[3] bridge of Tours, crossing the Loire with fifteen arches to the Place de Choiseuil, and so up the hill on the further side past S. Symphorien. As one enters the town from the north side, after crossing the bridge over the Loire, the road passes between two dignified pavilions, very similar in treatment to those in the Place du Martroy at Orléans and of the same date. The designers felt it was no use building a fine bridge unless some care was taken of the approaches, and some effort made to mark the entrance to the town with dignified features, a point which modern bridge-designers have failed to realize. At Waterloo Bridge, for example, on the north end, no serious attempt has yet been made on the west side to balance the façade of Somerset House on the opposite side of the road, and the approach to Waterloo Bridge on the south side is simply disgraceful. A great bridge might be the finest public monument that it is possible to conceive, but it very seldom is, because the authorities complacently think they have done all that is necessary when they have built the bridge, and do not realize that the bridge is only half the battle.

The bridges and roads of France became a very serious consideration towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. I have already described J. H. Mansart's failures at Moulins and elsewhere, and it appears that at that time the Frère Romain was the only man who could be relied on to build a bridge that would not fall to pieces. Gabriel, the elder, designed the graceful bridge over the Loire at Blois

[1] Built 1756-68, 276 mm. long on 12 arches. M. Carrè, "Histoire de France," viii, 2, 7, gives the date as 1716, but the bridge is later.

[2] The other arm of the Loire.

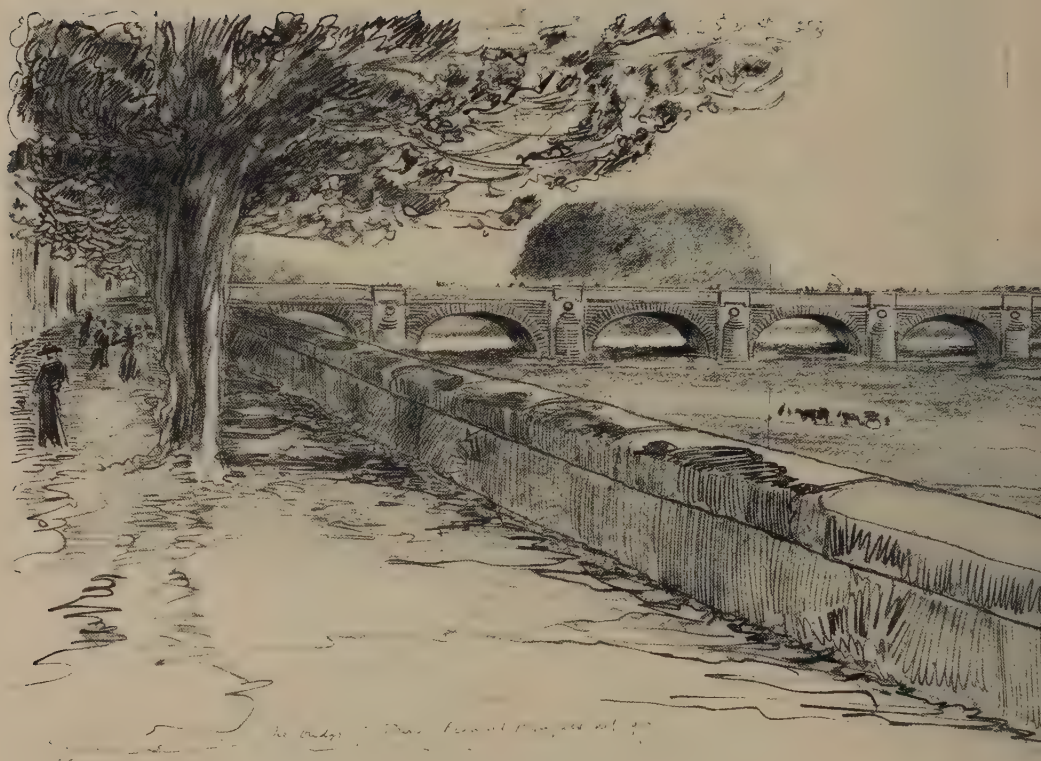
[3] Built in 1765-1777 from the designs of Bayeux of the Ponts et Chaussées. Bauchal says that he designed the bridges of Port de Pile in 1740, Membrolle 1748, Montbazon 1750, and the bridge over the Cher 1765. He does not identify him with the Bayeux who designed the Hôtel de Ville of Beauvais 1750-53. The bridge of Tours is 434 m. 18 long and 14 m. 60 wide.

Pont. Neuf. Toulouse
Reginald. Blomfield. 1908.

PONT NEUF, TOULOUSE (see p. 179)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

PL. CXCIV

[ILL. TO FACE P. 178

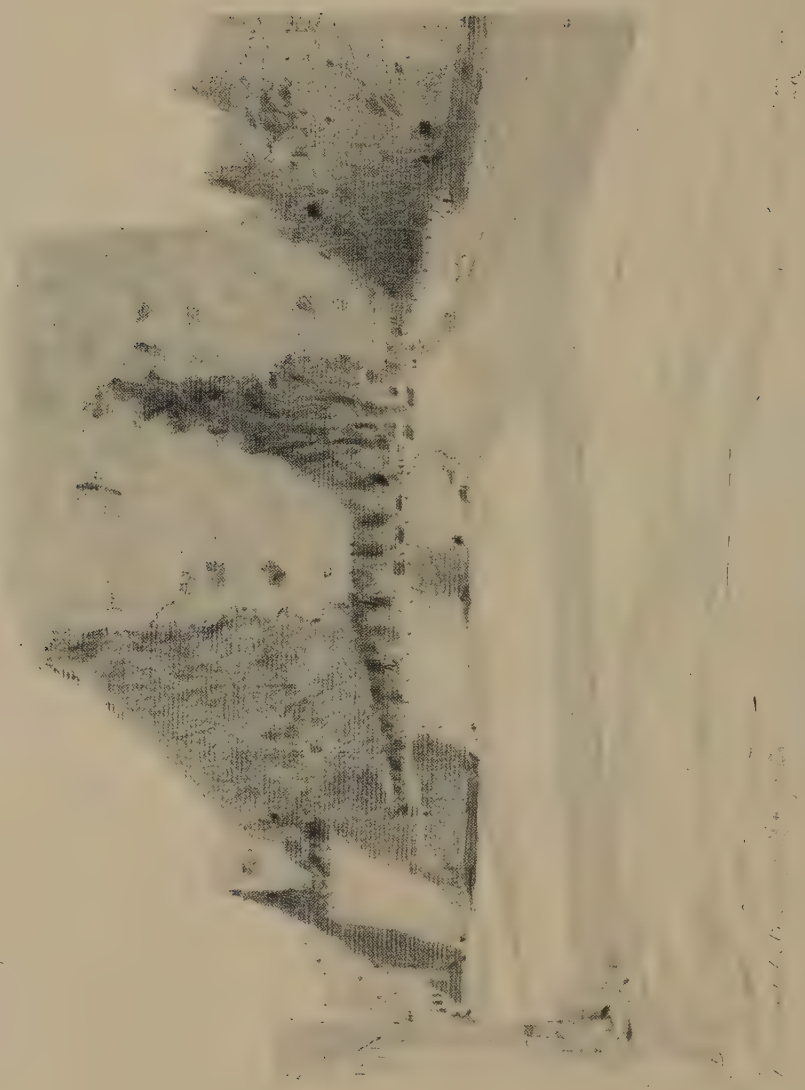


THE BRIDGE

(FROM A DRAWIN

(see p. 178)

NALD BLOMFIELD)



PROMENADE DES TERREAUX, AVALLON (see p. 180)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

in 1717,[1] but Gabriel was an excellent architect and understood building construction, which Mansart did not, and it was evident that the whole question of bridges required to be taken in hand by the State. The Bridge of Charenton collapsed in 1714, the old bridges of Blois and Saumur in 1716, and that of Permil at Nantes in 1719. In 1715 the Council of the Interior, presided over by the Duc d'Antin, established the "Ponts et Chaussées," to consist of twenty-one engineers, three inspectors, an inspector general, and a director general, le Marquis de Beringhen. The roads were as bad as the bridges. The roads in Guyenne were impracticable for vehicles, and it was not till 1738 that they were seriously taken in hand by Orry, the Contrôleur Général, who established the "Corvée Royale,"[2] for the making and maintenance of roads. The system was grossly unjust. Everybody with any interest escaped the work, but from the point of view of State finance it worked well. The State gained labour, estimated to be worth five to six million livres a year in 1738, and in 1774 it was worth twice that sum, and the roads of France were the best in Europe. In 1743 Trudaine established a School of Engineering for the Ponts et Chausées; and it was to these men that France owes her beautiful bridges of the eighteenth century. In addition to those[3] already referred to I may mention the bridges of Chalons sur Marne (1771), of Mantes, of Neuilly, the eighteenth-century bridge of Moulins, the beautiful fountains on either side of the "Pont des Belles Fontaines" at Juvisy (Seine et Oise) dating from the early part of the eighteenth century, and the very remarkable Pont Neuf over the Garonne at Toulouse, with the strange openings in the piers for the passage of flood water.

[1] The trophy below the obelisk on the central arch was by Coustou.

[2] The "Corvée Royale" enforced the actual work of constructing and maintaining roads on the inhabitants of the district through which the roads passed. Every man from sixteen to sixty-six was required to do his share of work, varying from eight to forty days a year, under pain of imprisonment, and they had to bring their own provisions, tools, and beasts of burden. See H. Carrè, "Histoire de France," ed. Lavisse, viii, 2, 101-103, and 7.

[3] The bridge of Neuilly crossing the Seine to the east of the the Bois de Boulogne was completed in 1772, from the designs of Perronet. It is 750 feet long in five arches, each 120 feet wide with a rise of 30 feet. Blondel says their curve was struck from 11 centres. It is 45 feet wide. Waterloo bridge has nine arches, 120 feet wide with a rise of 35 feet, the width between parapets is 42 feet 6 inches. The piers are 20 feet thick as against 13 feet thick at Neuilly. Blondel, or rather Patte, says that a settlement at Waterloo Bridge of 1 foot was expected, but that the actual settlement was 8 inches. So perfect was Rennie's engineering, that after the centres were struck the great arches only settled $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées was, I believe, the first technical engineering school established, and its institution marked the further specialization of architecture, and its unfortunate separation for the future from engineering. Perronet, the first director of the School, was the last of the architect engineers.[1]

At several towns in the provinces important schemes of improvement were undertaken by local authorities about the first half of the eighteenth century. Waste spaces were skilfully converted into promenades and "Places." I have already referred to the Promenade du Peyrou at Montpellier. The Place des Quinconces and the Allée de Tourny[2] at Bordeaux, the Allée de Tourny at Perigueux, 300 metres long and 80 wide,[3] and the Promenade de la Hotoie at Amiens, are well known examples, but the boldest of these schemes is the "Promenade des Terreaux" (or Vauban) at Avallon. That town stands on the end of a rocky plateau some 850 feet above the sea, and on the east side of the town there is a large open space sloping downwards rapidly. In 1720 an unknown designer conceived the bold idea of running out a great pier, or earthwork, planted with avenues of limes, with stone retaining walls on either side, descending by two levels and flights of stairs to the lower ground. At the upper end, by the modern statue of Vauban, four steps lead up to the upper walk, 124 paces long by 34 wide. A broad walk, about 30 feet wide, runs down the centre, flanked by a double row of cut lime-trees, with side walks and balustrades above the retaining walls on the outer sides. At the further end twelve steps descend to a landing, from which a double staircase descends to the lower walk; this continues outwards down the hill, 24 paces wide and 59 paces long, with a single avenue of limes, and terminates in a hemicycle, with a flight of eight steps to the lower ground. The limes of the lower walk are kept to the same height as those of the upper walk, but its side walls, instead of being kept horizontal as in the upper walk, follow the running level. The whole pier is isolated with open spaces on either side, and the effect of its great mass running boldly out from the higher ground is extremely fine. The men who could imagine such a design as this, so simple and

[1] Jean Rodolphe Perronet, born at Suresnes 1708, died at Paris 1794. He entered the Ponts et Chaussées in 1745, was elected a member of the Academy of Architecture 1756. He designed the bridges of Mantes, Nogent sur Seine, Neuilly (1768-74), Pont Sainte Maxence, and the Pont Louis XVI (1787-92). (Bauchal.)

[2] Now a paved open space without any trees.

[3] Laid out in 1750. Tourny was Governor of Guienne.

yet so large in conception, must have been considerable artists—men who could dispense with commonplace details, and rely on mass, scale, and perfect unity of idea. Modern designers trust too much to detail. Instead of facing the problem as a whole, and concentrating on the discovery of its master-key, in the confidence that when that is found, all the detail necessary will fall into its place, they choose the easier but ineffectual course of adopting certain details, and treating the general scheme as a framework to hold their details together. At Avallon, for example, a modern landscape gardener would have put a bandstand in the centre of the whole open space, peppered the site with shrubs and kiosques, and wound his mean little paths in and out of his shrubberies. The result would have been that with which we are painfully familiar in most of the public gardens of the larger provincial towns of this country. Avallon is quite a small town of under 6,000 inhabitants, and though of extreme antiquity, has probably never been larger, and yet in 1720 its inhabitants, guided by a good designer and a great tradition, could undertake this considerable public work, fine alike in conception and execution, and in its own way almost unique.

It is a mistake to suppose that in the eighteenth century intelligence and appreciation of the arts was confined to Paris. Bordeaux, Lyons, Dijon, to mention three only of the larger towns, pursued an active intellectual life of their own, and the provincials were as keenly alive to the importance of beautifying their cities as any Parisian. One might almost say they were more so. De Brosses, writing from Rome in 1740, says of the Italians: "Voilà ce qu'on entend bien mieux ici qu'à Paris, ou l'on n'a pas assez d'intention, a étendre les aspects et ménager des pointes de vue,"[1] and on his way to Rome from Dijon he noted a beautiful promenade at Aix en Provence. "Elle est d'une fort largeur et assez longue. Les maisons en sont hautes belles et à l'Italienne. Quatre rangs d'arbres y forment deux contre allées où l'on se promène, et une large allée au milieu ornée de quatre grand fontaines . . . cette rue est terminée d'un bout par une balustrade qui donne sur la campagne, et de l'autre par un bel hôtel appartenant au Trésorier de la provence." Here we have the distinctive qualities of eighteenth century architecture, the sense of composition as a whole, the selection and adjustment of detail, the consideration of the problem of design from every point of view. We have a few fountains in

[1] "Lettres Familières," ii, 286, and i, 25.

London, one of them an extremely fine one, most of them insignificant, but they are usually dry, or allowed the most parsimonious play, and our municipal authorities are nervous about large planning, as outside the range of practical business. We have a long leeway to make up, but the fault lies with the authorities. Opportunities are wasted again and again. If those in control possessed more foresight and imagination, if they could habituate themselves to think in larger spaces artists would not be slow to rise to the occasion.

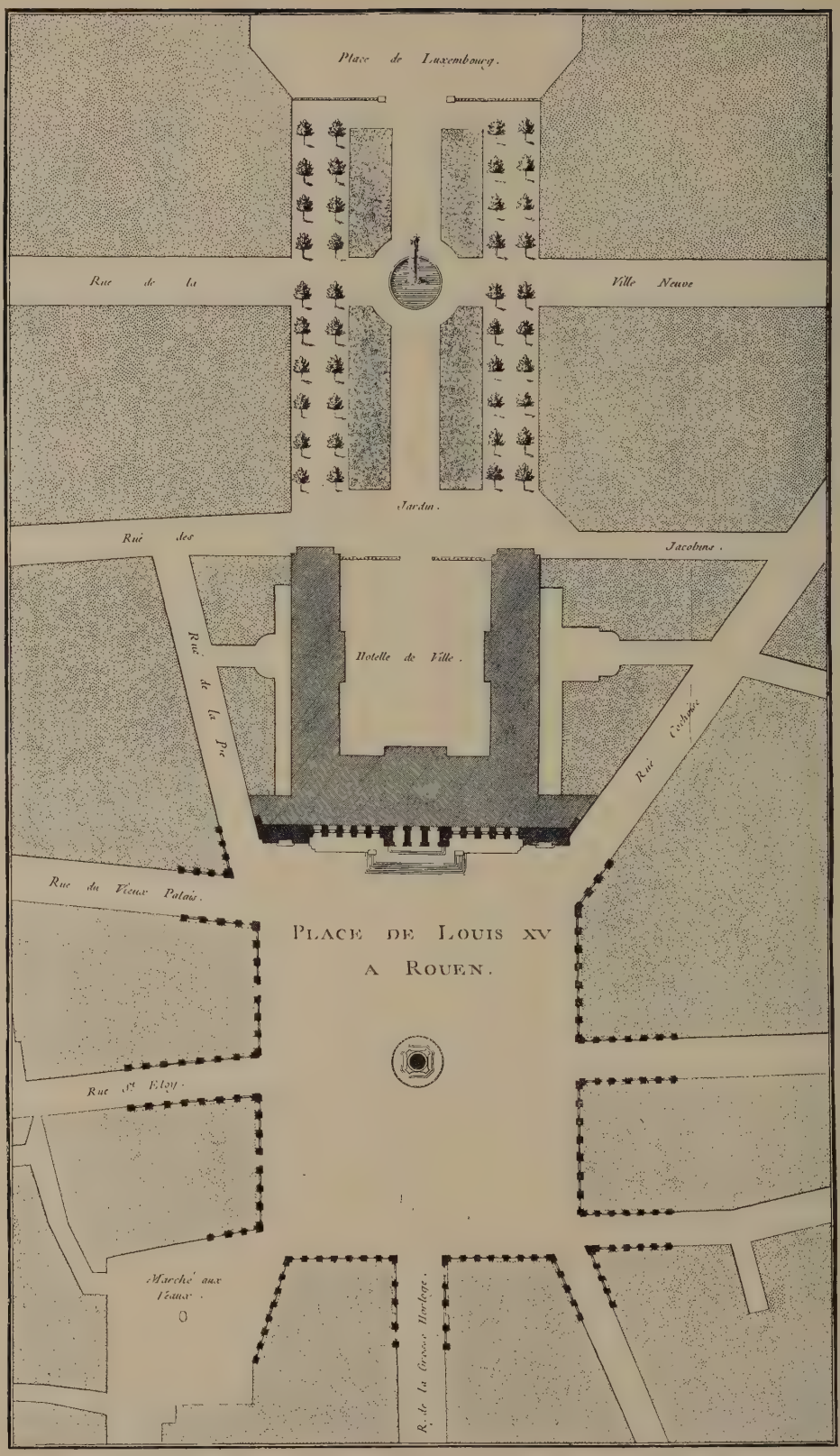
The triumphal arches erected in the great towns of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries form another important chapter in the architectural history of that period. The earlier examples were actual fortified gateways, such as the entrance gate on the east side of Peronne or the Porte de la Citadelle of Nancy, built in 1598, excellent examples of the military engineering of the time, when engineering was still treated as part of architecture. The Porte de Tournai in the old fortifications of Lille, with its pairs of massive engaged Doric columns and double archway drawbridges is a later example, and still retains its military purpose; but both here and still more in the Porte de Paris at Lille, and the Porte S. George at Nancy, the architectural motive predominates, and the next step is the Triumphal arch, standing naked and unabashed in the streets, regardless of its discrepancy with adjacent buildings, and its extreme inconvenience to the public. In the Port S. Nicolas at Nancy (seventeenth century) the centre of the roadway is occupied by the pier between the two arches, a fatal defect in any triumphal arch, and one that François Blondel was careful to avoid in the Porte S. Denis, by far the finest of these triumphal arches,[1] though its incongruous modern surroundings make it difficult to realize its splendid quality. The Porte S. Martin, designed by Bullet[2] a little later, is inferior both to this and to the Arc de Triomphe at Montpellier. In the eighteenth century a number of these archways were erected. The Porte Desilles (1735)[3] the Arc de Triomphe between the Place Stanislas and the Place de la Carrière and the Porte Stanislas (1761) at Nancy, the Porte Borgogne (1751), and the Porte Dijeaux (1748) at Bordeaux, the Porte Guillaume (1749) at Rouen, the Porte Guillaume at Dijon (1783), the Porte Ste. Croix at

[1] Perrault's design for the arc de Triomphe du Trône was never completed and finally removed. From the engravings it appears probable that it would have been a magnificent if somewhat florid monument.

[2] See chap. xvii.

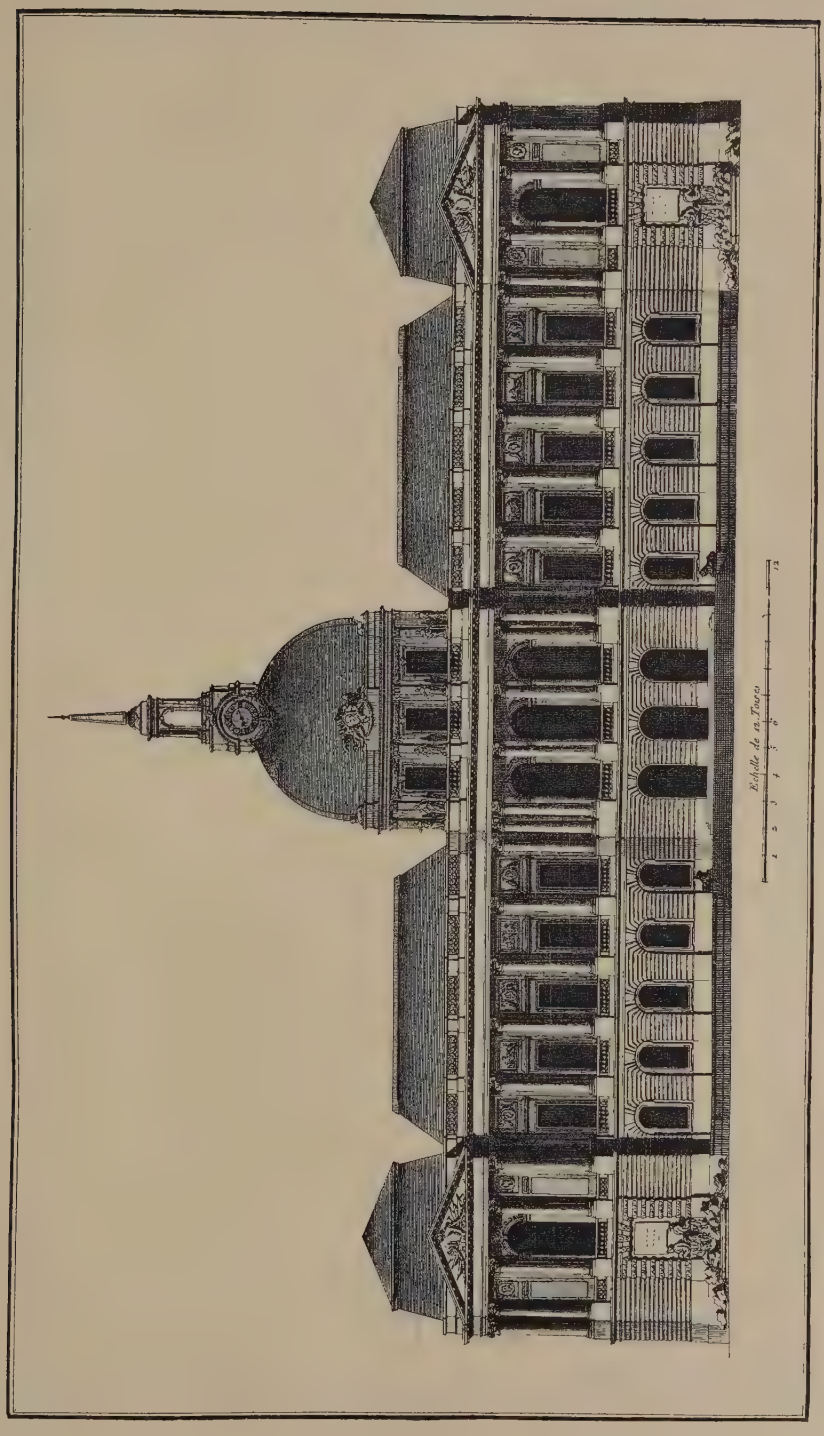
[3] Also called Porte de Stainville and de Metz.

PORTE DE LA CITADELLE, NANCY (p. 182)
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)



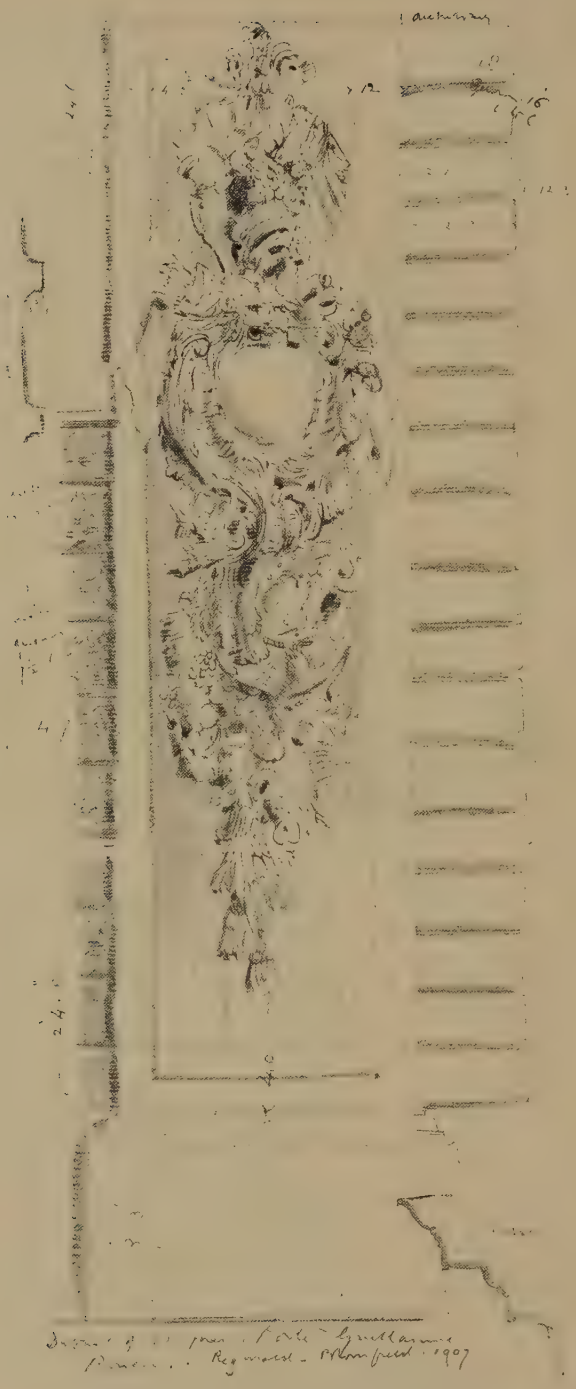
[Patte, "Mons. Erigés"

PLAN FOR PLACE LOUIS XV AND LAY OUT, ROUEN. BY CARPENTIER



Patte, "Mons. Eriges."

DESIGN FOR THE HÔTEL DE VILLE, ROUEN. BY CARPENTIER



DETAIL OF PIER, PORTE GUILLAUME, ROUEN
(FROM A DRAWING BY REGINALD BLOMFIELD)

Chalons sur Marne, the Arc de Triomphe de Carrousel[1] (1806) at Paris, and the culminating effort and failure of the enormous Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile at the head of the Champs Elysées.[2] Many of these archways are well designed, but the fault of nearly all of them is their want of relation to their surroundings. There seems no particular reason why they should be there, and a good many reasons why they should not. The want of support at the sides, and the fact that they are not linked up to anything else, a great wall, a colonnade, or even a pole-hedge of clipped lime, intensifies this impression of futility.

I have already referred to the town-planning schemes of Bordeaux, Rennes, and Nancy. Patte describes the Place[3] laid out at Rennes in 1756 from the designs of Legendre, Engineer of the Ponts et Chaussées of the province, and completed in 1762. In the centre was the statue of Louis XV by Pigalle. The design of the façades is correct but uninteresting, and the Place itself is too small. The scheme prepared by Le Carpentier[4] for Rouen in 1757 was much finer. It was approved by the King and begun in 1758. Le Carpentier proposed to convert the old market-place into a Place in honour of Louis XV. The site lay on a line between the west door of the cathedral and the Hôtel Dieu, and he prepared a comprehensive scheme with the object of linking together the most remarkable buildings of Rouen: "un enchaînement des édifices remarkables, dont la Place du Roi pourroit passer pour le centre."[5] The place was to be 330 feet long by 288 wide. The Hôtel de Ville, 270 feet wide, was to occupy one side, and opposite to it a street 36 feet wide, was to run in a straight line to the Cathedral. The Hôtel de Ville was to include rooms for an Académie Des Belles Lettres and concert halls, in addition to the municipal offices. The work was begun, but after a few years was stopped entirely, and there is now no trace of the building.

It is clear that by the middle of the eighteenth century much attention was being given to town-planning. As early as 1734, Michel Turgot, Marquis de Sousmons, and Prevôt des Marchands, presided

[1] Percier and Fontaine.
Begun from designs of Chalgrin in 1806, and completed under Louis Philippe.

[3] 240 feet by 216 feet, now "La Place du Palais," with a fountain and large circular basin in the centre.

[4] "Architecte du Roi, si connu par le goût et le génie, qui caracterisent toutes ses productions." Antoine Michel Le Carpentier was elected an academician in 1755, the same year as Jacques François Blondel. He died in 1772 aged sixty-three.

[5] Patte, "Monumens," p. 178. Le Carpentier published his plans and elevations.

over a committee of gentlemen formed to organize a complete survey of Paris, "de faire voire d'un seul coup d'œil tous les édifices et toutes les Rues."[1] In order to make the survey intelligible, it was set up as an isometrical bird's-eye view, showing the streets and the houses in sufficient detail to identify all notable buildings, and in addition to this the names of the buildings are given on the map itself.[2] The survey was drawn up in twenty consecutive sheets, with a twenty-first key plate giving the numbers and relative positions of the numbered sheets. This splendid survey must have been of the greatest assistance to the architects of Paris, and within ten years of its publication they had their opportunity in the competition for the placing of the King's monument by Bouchardon. It was the regular practice to commission the King's statues first and then to consider where they should be placed. In this case the Prévôt and Echevins of Paris demanded permission of the King to put up their monument in his honour in any part of Paris that he might select, and the next step was to ask for suggestions as to a site. De Tournehem held the first competition in 1748, a number of Academicians and others sent in designs, but as they all involved the destruction of existing buildings, none of the designs was adopted, and the King presented a site to the west of the Tuileries gardens between the Champs Elysées and the Pont Tournant. As shown in Turgot's map it was to all intents waste ground. Marigny, who had succeeded de Tournehem, started a second competition. Fifteen[3] academicians competed, including Gabriel, and among outsiders Servandoni, but the King, finding there were good points in all the designs, desired to combine them in one, and handed over the work to his premier archi-

[1] Inscription on Title-page.

[2] All the important Hotels in existence at the time are shown on the plates, and the architecture is that of the actual building; for example, on plate 15 the north and east sides of the Louvre, that is, all work subsequent to Lemercier, is shown without any roofs at all, and the sheds and buildings used by the Contractor under Perrault are shown still standing in the centre of the courtyard. The gallery of Henri IV connecting the Louvre and Tuileries is shown, all the rest of the ground between the two palaces is shown still blocked with houses and narrow streets. The series of plates is invaluable for the reconstruction of Paris of the first half of the eighteenth century, and also for understanding its alterations and development subsequent to that date. This survey was set up and drawn by Louis Bretez, engraved by Claude Lucas, with writing by Aubin. The work was issued in 1739 in separate sheets, and also in a form available for binding in one volume—a bound copy in my possession measures 2 ft. 1 in. by 1 ft. 7 in.

[3] Gabriel, Soufflot, Boffrand, Contant, F. Blondel, Aubry, Chevotet, Godeau, Hazon, Le Bon, de L'Assurance, de Luzy, L'Ecuyer, Beausire, Loriot, Servandoni, Pitrou, and Destouches, also sent in designs (Patte, "Mons. érigés," 121, note *a*).

tecte, A. J. Gabriel. Gabriel's treatment of the problem was masterly. The Rue Royale did not exist. There was a Ha-ha separating the plantations of the Champs Elysées, and a grille with piers at the entrance to the Cours la Reine, but the actual site had merely footpaths running across it anyhow. Gabriel's design was the most important thing of its kind in the eighteenth century in regard not only to its intrinsic merit, but also to its comprehensiveness, its clear conception of main axis lines and vistas, to the Madeleine on the north and across the river to the south, and from the Tuileries Palace the whole length of the Tuileries Gardens over the Pont Tournant across the Place Louis XV, up the Champs Elysées to the crest which was to be marked by the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile fifty years later. But the rejected designs of the first competition are of great interest. Patte illustrates in detail the principal designs. Most of the competitors proposed sites between the Pont Marie and the Champs Elysées from east to west, and from S. Eustache to the entrance to the Luxembourg from north to south. Over fifty designs were sent in, but as several architects selected the same sites, the actual number of sites proposed was only twenty; among them were the Isle S. Louis,[1] the Place Dauphine and the Carrousel, the Halles, and the Hôtel de Soissons,[2] the Quai Malaquais,[3] the front of the colonnade of the Louvre,[4] La Grêve, opposite the Hôtel de Ville and on part of the site of it,[5] the end of the Rue de Tournon and quartier S. Jacques,[6] the end of the Pont Royal,[7] the Isle de la Cité, and the Isle S. Louis.[8] All the designs illustrated provided for the rebuilding of adjacent buildings and definite proposals of alignment, with the exception of Servandoni, who sailed away with a huge amphitheatre to be placed anywhere, where anyone liked, on the outskirts of the city. Nor did the designers regard the cost. Pitrou proposed a new Hôtel de Ville with a façade 600 feet long, facing north on a broad quay next the river. Boffrand proposed to clear away the Halles and the Hôtel de Soissons, and to build new Halles in the manner of a Roman Forum with three great courts, with the Place pour le Roi in the centre, entered through a vast screen of colossal Corinthian columns, standing on pedestals 20 feet high, and of a total height of 63 feet to the soffit of the entablature. Boffrand's third scheme was to form one huge Place about 1,000 feet long by 400 wide

[1] Pitrou, Inspecteur Général des Ponts et Chaussées.
[2] Alternative proposals by Boffrand, who sent in three designs.
[3] Contant and Slodtz in different parts of the Quai. [4] Destouches and Chevotet.
[5] Rousset. [6] Polard. [7] Aubri. [8] Soufflot.

between the old Louvre and the Tuileries, and shows the same misuse of the orders as in his scheme for the Halles. Contant, an abler architect, proposed a Place du Roi on the south side of the river opposite the Gallerie du Louvre, the principal feature of which was to be a new Hôtel de Ville, flanked by the Hôtel de Bouillon on the east, and the Theâtins on the west. His design is the most advanced of any in its effort after the antique, but it is spoilt by indifference to scale in his orders.[1] The plan, however, is an attractive one, and would have greatly improved this side of the river, and the whole scheme was superior to the absurdly impracticable proposals of Boffrand. The brothers Slodtz, "également habiles en sculpture et en architecture," also proposed a Place and a new Hôtel de Ville on the Quai Malaquais further east. Their design was more remarkable for its sculpture than its architecture, and "pour rendre pittoresque sa décoration," enormous pieces of stone, carved in a manner, "sçavament bizarre," to imitate rocks, were to be placed in the river at the foot of the retaining wall of the Place, a strange example of the fashion for the Romantic plus the Antique, which was gradually undermining the national architecture of France. The brothers Slodtz cheerfully proposed to remove the pavilions of Le Vau's Collège des Quatres Nations, because they would have blocked the view of the royal monument in the centre of their Place. The proposals of Soufflot and Aubri have been already referred to. Two of the competitors, Destouches and Chevotet, proposed to sweep away all the buildings in front of the Colonnade of the Louvre, and form a great Place on the site. Destouches's idea was to repeat the design of the colonnade on the north side, to place a grille on the south side lineable with the south side of the Louvre, and to form a new Hôtel de Ville east of this, extending from his new Place up to the Pont Neuf. Chevotet was even more heroic, for he proposed to pull down all the buildings between the Louvre and the Pont Neuf, including S. Germain l'Auxerrois, and on the site to form the Place and an "avant cour" to the Louvre separated from the Place by a fosse. The Place itself, 550 feet by 420 feet, was to be enclosed by a balustrade with "guérites" at the four angles, supporting "figures allégoriques aux vertus de notre auguste monarque."[2] In the centre

[1] The design shows three scales, the colossal Corinthian order of the frontispiece, 48 feet high; immediately next this, the Ionic order of the curtain façades, 35 feet high, and on the quadrants at the ends a little Doric order, 15 feet high.

[2] Patte. The "Parc au Cerfs" at Versailles had not yet become a matter of common knowledge.

was to be the monument of the King. On the north side he proposed two government buildings, a mint and a salt storehouse, and on the east side, opposite the entrance to the Louvre, suggested a new church of S. Germain. The resemblance in motive of Chevotet's design to the final design of Gabriel is remarkable, the fosse, the "Guérites," the placing of the two government buildings on the north side, all reappear in Gabriel's design; and no doubt these features were in the mind of the King or his advisers when the final designs were prepared. With this exception I do not think any of the proposals made in this momentous competition have ever been carried out. The Place de la Concorde was the last great effort of the old regime to improve Paris. The Revolution was more occupied with what M. Schneider calls "grandes cérémonies civiques," staged in the correct antique manner, than with permanent schemes of improvement. In 1802 a competition was held for "arcs de Triomphe" to commemorate the peace of Amiens; the arcs de Carrousel and de l'Étoile followed soon after. Quatremère de Quincy was instant in suggestions for the classicizing of Paris on the model of Rome. S. Germain-en-Laye was again threatened, even the Louvre was not to be spared; and de Quincy relied on the taste and opinion of all educated persons to support him in his effort to remodel "sur un plan uniforme . . . conçu tout entier d'un seul coup, la vieille ville lentement formée par les ages, et dont les imprévus prétendus pittoresques ne leur paraissent que malfaçons."[1] The outbreak of the Romantic movement prevented anything of the sort, but between the two, between the relentless pedantry of the doctrinaires and the undisciplined exuberance of the Romantics, the beautiful art of France was lost. Its architecture, at once so supple and so strong, remains a gracious memory of the past that we can never now recover.

[1] Schneider, "Quatremère de Quincy," p. 76.

CHAPTER XXX

The End of a Great Tradition

IN the foregoing pages I have endeavoured to trace the origin, development, and decline of the old French tradition of neo-classic architecture, a chapter in the history of art scarcely less important than the Italian Renaissance itself. It began at the extreme end of the fifteenth century as an exotic fashion of the Court, imposed on the native builders, who continued to build as their fathers before them, and did their best to disguise the fact by an abundance of extraneous ornament. Within a hundred years altered conditions of life and a higher standard of civilization converted this foreign importation into a real vernacular art. French architects of great ability, such as De L'Orme and Bullant, threw themselves into it with unsparing enthusiasm, and yet in a spirit of vigorous independence. They set out to master the technique of Roman architecture in order to use it for their own purpose, and without any idea of direct and servile imitation. They were still, however, encumbered by details—Bullant was not quite sure of his technique, De L'Orme was mastered by his, and for nearly one generation the wars of the Ligue closed down the development of architecture in France. The seventeenth century, under the wise inspiration of Henri IV, opened with a genuine national architecture—simple, direct, charming in its recovered use of materials,[1] the true parallel for France of our Jacobean. Such buildings as the fragment of Montmorency-Ducey, Daubeuf, Balleroy, or Miromesnil, in Normandy, are typical examples of this most attractive manner, which

[1] This sense of material was lost in the eighteenth century. Blondel, "Arch. Franc.," i, 236, writes: "la matière doit être comptée pour rien, la beauté de masses, la proportion des parties, et la réunion du tout ensemble, sont les premières considerations qu'on doit avoir dans l'architecture pour ce que concerne l'ordonnance." The characteristic weakness of French architecture in the nineteenth century was largely owing to this severance of architecture from building.

established itself so firmly for country-house design, that it lasted into the eighteenth century, and was actually used by Soufflot at Menars as late as 1765. Meanwhile, the leading French architects in Paris had been pounding away at orthodox classic, De Brosse at S. Gervais and the Luxembourg, and Lemercier at the Oratory and the Louvre, and early in the seventeenth century an architect of commanding genius appeared in François Mansart, the counterpart of our Inigo Jones, an artist of extraordinary ability, endowed with an unrivalled sense of scale and proportion. The details of classical design were fluid in his hands, and I have never come across any work of his which fails in knowledge and mastery of his means of expression. Wren had more resource and greater range of genius, but in accomplishment and finesse, in power of carrying through his design to its last detail, François Mansart stands above any modern architect. The staircase, at Blois, Maisons, and the interior of the Church of S. Marie in the Rue S. Antoine are masterpieces of modern architecture. François Mansart represents the culminating point in the French tradition prior to the reorganization of the arts by Colbert. He himself was too old, too much of an artist, and too little of a courtier, to suit that iron-handed minister. For a time the chief authority fell into the hands of Le Vau, an estimable man but a second-rate architect, and it was owing to the inadequacy of Le Vau, to Colbert's anxiety to find a new man to inaugurate the real reign of Louis XIV, and to the adroit manœuvres of his brother, that Claude Perrault, amateur though he was, became for a time the leading architect in France. He, too, was a man of original genius, and struck out a line of his own in the Colonnade of the Louvre and the Arc de Triomphe du Trône, which owing to professional jealousy, ended more or less in a cul-de-sac. The architects would not follow his lead or recognize his authority, and Colbert, who only cared for architecture as a political asset, wanted some accommodating man of affairs, who would keep the King permanently occupied with his buildings, while he himself administered the State. He found in Jules Hardouin Mansart the exact man for his purpose—able, astute, unhampered by convictions or scruples of any sort. Mansart's career was one of extraordinary success, but the conclusion I have come to is that he was not a great artist, and that his vast influence on the architecture of France led to the slow decline of the art, and the loss of that high ideal which had been the constant aim of the elder Mansart. Moreover, architecture became too exclusively an affair of the Court, which meant an affair of fashion, and

the fine independence enjoyed by artists under the careless rule of Mazarin became a thing of the past. On the other hand, Colbert's establishment of the Academies did much to regularize the arts, to organize art training, and to free the arts from the paralysing monopoly of the old Guilds. The Academy of Architecture and the French Academy at Rome, at any rate in the earlier days of their establishment, did invaluable work in investigating and standardizing the technique of architecture, and it was due to their efforts that French architects were thoroughly trained within the limits of their training. Moreover, the King's passion for building provided a unique school of training in the building crafts, and enabled French architects of the eighteenth century to rely with confidence on the skill and ability of their workmen to carry out the most difficult pieces of construction, and the most intricate ornament. The tide of fashion ebbed and flowed. The generation of the Regent was bored to death with the pomp and circumstance of Louis XIV and Mme. de Maintenon, and compensated itself by license without limit, both in their lives and their surroundings. Most of the big houses were already built; moreover, most of the upper classes were hard hit by the failure of Law's system, and the result was that relatively speaking there was little building in France in the eighteenth century. Attention was concentrated on internal decoration. Oppenord and Meissonnier became the fashionable architects, and it was their extravagances and absurdities that produced the reaction for the Antique, and gave an opening for the pedants and revivalists in the eighteenth century. It was only in public architecture that the national tradition was maintained by such men as Gabriel, father and son, and in his earlier days by Soufflot, with Blondel as its exponent in the Academy school at the Louvre. The intellectual position of these men can be gathered from Blondel's writings. They looked upon architecture as a practical art, that is, they were not prepared to sacrifice their design and the working purpose of their building to any *à priori* formula. On the other hand they paid, and were allowed to pay, much more attention to purely architectural considerations of mass, scale proportion, and grouping, the proper setting of their building and its adequate expression, than would be possible under modern conditions. These things were considered worth some sacrifice in the eighteenth century. As to ornament, they used it as it ought to be used, as the servant of architecture, not its mistress,[1] and though sculptors such as

[1] Blondel, "Arch. Fran.," i, 266, says: "Il est contre la bienséance que cette dernière (sculpture) interrompe l'architecture. C'est celle ci qui doit donner le ton a

Couston and Lorraine sometimes took the bit in their mouths, there was, as a rule, an excellent harmony between architect and sculptor. The sculptors were familiar with the technique of architecture, and well down into the eighteenth century knew how to combine the necessary realism with the vital traditions of architectural composition. Pigalle's[1] pedestal to the statue of Louis XV at Rheims, with its figures of France and Commerce, is a beautiful example, and though it was Quatremère de Quincy's most cherished dogma that sculpture a d architecture had been divorced since the days of the Porte S. Denis, and that he himself had brought them together again in the sculpture of the Panthéon, the facts were the exact contrary. His allegorical groups of figures standing loosely about in their pediments have no real relation to the architecture at all; they do not grow out of it, they do not keep its planes or its texture as a whole, the sculptor appears to have forgotten all about the architecture, and it was owing to De Quincy's disastrous attack on a great tradition that the art of architectural sculpture was almost lost in France.

The fact was that the older men, whether architects or sculptors, were artists first, and did not concern themselves with either ethics or politics, and the same sanity and balanced judgment is evident in their attitude to mediaeval art. It is quite a mistake to suppose that they despised it. They themselves were trained in different methods which were accepted by their contemporaries as a matter of course, but that fact did not blind them to the achievements of Gothic architecture. Daviler, writing about 1670, though severe on the proportions of mediaeval churches, says that their builders sought to make their buildings permanent, and so win our admiration and respect.[2] In 1708 the Academy of Architecture itself gave a critical appreciation of earlier pointed architecture, preferring it to the work of the fifteenth century, on account of "une grande simplicité et des proportions avantageuses dans les principales parties," whereas later work was more remarkable for size and delicacy of detail than for "ordonnance and proportions."[3] Boffrand allowed some beauty to certain Gothic churches, "quoique

toute l'ordonnance du bâtiment, a fin que l'un et l'autre de concert concourent également à former un bel ensemble."

[1] Pigalle died in 1785 at the age of seventy-one.

[2] "Les Œuvres d'Architecture d'Antoine Le Pautre," p. 38. There is no date, but Daviler refers to "defunt M. Mansart" (François), and as the book had to be published within twenty years from 1652 when its licence was issued, the date appears to be between 1665 and 1672.

[3] "Procès-Verbaux de l'Acad. d'Arch.," iii, 291.

toujours gatées par quantité de sculptures, sans connection, sans goût, mal imaginées et mal placées." Their beauty came, he says, from a certain just proportion of width and height, and from "le rapport de toutes les parties avec le tout," and he urged that justice ought to be done to these men who built so well that in spite of "la hardiesse et le légèrété apparente de leur édifices," their buildings have stood the test of time. Even Blondel noted that in Gothic churches one remarked "une grandeur capable d'inspirer de la veneration au peuple, et d'attirer les suffrages de la multitude," and admitted that "L'Architecture Gothique n'est pas aussi maladroitement imaginée qu'on pourroit croire. . . . Il y a nombre d'édifices Gothiques où il regne une délicatesse singulière dans la bâtisse et que les meilleurs constructeurs de nos jours seroient forts embarrassés d'imiter."[1] This is a handsome compliment from the protagonist of Classic. So long as the great tradition of French architecture lasted, there was no ridiculous controversy as between Gothic and Classic. That question only arose when choice had to be made between rival schemes of revivalism, and when it was envenomed by a bitter literary controversy.

The break up of the old French national tradition was, in fact, not the work of the architects, but of amateurs and literary men. Anne Claude Philippe de Thubières de Grimoard de Pestels de Lévi, Comte de Caylus, born in 1692, was a gentleman of means and leisure who unfortunately devoted his life to archaeology and the arts, and still more unfortunately was accepted by the French Academy of Painting as a first-rate authority. He was received by the Academy of Painting in 1731[2] as "conseiller honoraire amateur," and described in the register as "connoisseur profond." He took up his position at once, and in 1732 read the first of his interminable "discours" to the Academy. In 1747 Coypel, the Director of the Academy, dwelt on the great benefit to the arts of putting them "en liaison avec l'érudition, le goût épuré et l'esprit philosophique" of such men as the Comte de Caylus. In 1749 the official Minutes of the Academy describe him as one whom nothing escaped that could benefit the arts, "et dont le goût et les connaissances sont si utiles à l'Académie."[3] But the Academy had sold its birthright for a mess of pottage, and Caylus used his oppor-

[1] Blondel, "Cours," bk. vi, chap. vii. He mentions that when about forty years before Boffrand had been called in to reproduce the ruined rose window of the transept of Notre Dame, he was quite unable to make anything of it.

[2] The same year as Servandoni.

[3] "Procès-Verbaux," vi, 66 and 164.

tunity up to the hilt. He presented prizes for the study of heads, perspective, and osteology, and on the other hand, laid down the law to the Academy on art, not only its history, but its technique. The position taken up by Caylus was that of an uncompromising champion of the Antique as opposed to all modern methods, in preference indeed to the study of nature herself. He himself produced a vast quantity of inferior etchings and books of archaeology,[1] but the principal work of his life was to lecture the Academy. He seldom missed a sitting of that body, and for nearly thirty-five years, till his death in 1765, his authority on matters of art was accepted without demur. Caylus, for his part, took the Academicians to the salons of the fashionable ladies of the time: Mme. Geoffrin, Mme. du Deffand, Mme. de Tencin, or whoever it might be. But it was an unwholesome state of things, the Academy neglected its work for social advantages, and its end was not far off.

Caylus was the first, and in some ways the most disastrous member of the modern dynasty of the Amateurs. In 1750[2] the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum was announced to an excited and enthusiastic world. The amateurs, dukes and marquesses, high officials such as Marigny, gentlemen of position in the provinces like De Brosses, rushed to Italy on the Grand Tour and ransacked Rome, Naples, and Magna Graecia. A few years later (1756) Johann Joachim Winckelmann came to Rome, and after two journeys to Naples, attacked the views of the local antiquarians with such success that in 1763 he was appointed President of Antiquities in Rome and Librarian to the Vatican. His "Histoire de l'Art," which appeared in 1764, won him at once a European reputation, but he met with much opposition in Italy, and in 1768 was assassinated near Trieste on his way to

[1] "Recueil d'Antiquités (egyptiennes, étrusques, romaines, gauloises)," the first vol. in 1742, the sixth and last in 1764. These were presented to the Academy as they appeared: "Recueil des Peintures Antiques," 1757; "Mémoires sur la peinture à l'encaustique," 1755. In addition to these he read a whole series of discourses to the Academy to which the Director never failed to reply with effusion. Caylus was so pleased that he repeated them to the Academy ten years later. Caylus also presented a prize of 500 livres to the Académie des Inscriptions for the best interpretation of the monuments of antiquity. His critics unkindly suggested that the Comte could not translate his own inscriptions.

[2] Herculaneum had in fact been discovered early in the eighteenth century, and for some years the owner of the property had been in the habit of presenting his finds to his friends. It was not till 1738 that the opening up of Herculaneum was undertaken by the King of Naples. Pompeii was discovered in 1748. See Gabillot, "Hubert Robert," pp. 15-26, and note 2, p. 27 for a list of French works on Italy, published between 1760 and 1780.

Greece. Even before his death Lessing had demolished Winckelmann's theories in his "Laocoon" (1766), but the mischief was done. Caylus, "the illustrious amateur,"[1] had started the fashion of the Antique, Winckelmann gave it the sanction of the scholar and the archaeologist, Raphael Mengs that of the painter and professor,[2] and the splendid genius of Piranesi drove it home throughout Europe by his countless etchings and engravings. In 1758 the architect Leroy published the result of his travels in Greece,[3] and Stuart and Revett began to issue their "Antiquities of Athens" in 1762. In France and England architects were already deserting the great traditions of their countries; there was to be no escape from the antique, no resisting the paralysing authority of the pedants and the prigs.

The change did not pass unchallenged by some of the acutest minds in France. Diderot had a kindly feeling for Winckelmann. He says that he loved these Don Quixotes of archaeology, for whom the antique was their Dulcinea del Toboso,[4] but for the Comte de Caylus he had no mercy. Writing on the Salon of 1765, he says: "Nous avons perdu cette année deux grands peintres et deux habiles sculpteurs, Carle van Loo et Deshays l'Ainé, Bouchardon et Slodtz. En revanche le mort nous a delivrés du plus cruel des amateurs, le Comte de Caylus." In his brilliant criticisms of contemporary artists, Diderot had no patience with the heroic pictures of Hallé or Challe, artists unknown to us except through Diderot's contempt. Diderot cast in his lot whole-heartedly with the vivid realism of Chardin. Yet with all his sanity and freedom from prejudice, Diderot himself did not escape another curious strain that appears in the latter part of the eighteenth century, its exaggerated sentimentalism, especially in the matter of architecture. He thought the antique irrelevant and out of place, but, on the other hand, he conceived of architecture not as an art in itself, but as so much material for the painter, just as since his time it has generally been regarded as so much copy for the literary man. It was Diderot[5] who preferred the "chaumière," the "congestum cespite

[1] Official Minutes of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture.

[2] Mengs was professor in the Academy at Rome.

[3] "Ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce." The indefatigable Caylus had read a discourse on Greek sculpture to the Academy four years earlier. Woods and Dawkin's "Ruins of Palmyra" had appeared in 1755, and the "Ruins of Baalbeck" in 1757.

[4] "Salon de 1765," pp. 417-18.

[5] "Salon de 1767." I have dealt with this point at more length in my "Architectural Drawing and Draughtsmen," pp. 83-89.

culmen," to the façade of a palace, and who said: "Il faut ruiner un palais pour en faire un objêt d'intérêt," an apology perhaps for the work of the Pannini, Servandoni, Hubert Robert, and the painters of ruins, but also the expression of that morbid sentimentality which pervades Rousseau's Confessions, and which at the French Revolution jumped to the opposite extreme of ferocious brutality.[1] It was the same sentimentality, stirred to vigorous action by the preposterous tyranny of the Antique, that led to the triumph of the Romantics and the Gothic revival in the first half of the nineteenth century, but whether the craze of the time was for the Antique or for the Gothic that succeeded it, in both cases the movement sprang from causes extraneous to architecture itself. It did not proceed from any new development in materials and construction, nor had it the slightest relevance to the social habits of the time. The revival of the Antique was inspired partly by the connoisseur and virtuoso, aided and abetted by second-rate artists, who had sacrificed the ideals of their art to social promotion, and partly by the strained sentiment of the time, the notion that the austere virtues of the Republic could only find expression in direct reproduction of the art of ancient Rome. As for the Gothic revival, it was only a side issue of the ultimate revolt of the eighteenth century against all authority. It represented no movement in art inspired from within, no development of technique, no inevitable expression of compelling ideas. It was just the fringe of the vast wave that swept into space the tradition of centuries. With these various influences at work the old French tradition was doomed, and twenty years before the Revolution the younger generation of French architects had deserted it. Dates, as usual, overlap, but with the partial exception of Victor Louis, these men, Chalgrin, the two Peyres, De Wailly, Brongniart, Antoine, and Gondouin, belong to the younger school—the school of architects who had definitely adopted the standpoint of the antique, who had travelled in Italy, and who, on their return, hoped to reproduce in France, in terms as nearly identical as they could make them, the Temples of Rome and Magna Graecia.

Victor Louis, who was born at Paris in 1736, was placed equal

[1] Compare C. F. Volney, "Je vous salue, ruines solitaires, tombeaux saints, murs silencieux; c'est vous que j'invoque; c'est à vous que j'adresse ma prière" ("Les Ruines," p. 5). Volney found in them the true principles of Liberty, Equality and Justice, but this did not prevent him from deliberately misrepresenting the cost of Versailles, and ending his career as "pair de France et membre de l'Institut."

first for the Grand Prix d'Architecture in 1755, and went out to the French Academy in Rome in 1756, when Rome and Naples were ringing with the discovery of Pompeii. On his return to France, about 1763, he was entrusted with certain work on the choir of Chartres, and in 1765 was granted leave of absence to decorate Stanislas' palace at Nancy, and carry out certain work at Lunéville and Commercy; but on the King's death, in the following year, he returned to Paris and found a new patron in the Duc de Richelieu, Governor of Guienne, who employed him to design the famous theatre of Bordeaux, begun in 1773 and completed in 1780, on the site of the Roman Temple of the Piliers de Tutèle.[1] He also designed several houses and prepared a scheme for the improvement of the town, and schemes for Paris and Rouen, none of which were carried out. Louis, who died a ruined man about 1802, was undoubtedly a very able architect, and, unlike the rest of the group I have referred to, did not wholly abandon French traditional methods. In his work at Bordeaux one can still trace the light touch and the graceful fancy that was soon to disappear completely in France, but the exterior, with its colonnade, shows that at heart he was with the new movement. His anonymous biographer says: "Il emprunta du théâtre des anciens en y apportant des notables et importantes améliorations."[2] Even Quatremère de Quincy gave the theatre of Bordeaux his patronizing praise.

All the younger men mentioned, with the exception of Antoine and Brongniart, were winners of the Grand Prix in the Academy School of Architecture. Charles de Wailly, born in 1729, won the Grand Prix in 1752, and went to Rome in 1754. He visited Italy again in 1777, before designing the Odéon with the elder Peyre. The latter,

[1] See chap. viii, vol. i, p. 109 note. For a full and interesting account of the theatre at Bordeaux, see the "Porte-feuille Ichnographique de V. Louis," Paris, 1828. Dussieux, followed by Bauchal, says that Louis went to Warsaw in 1765 for Stanislas Poniatowski, and quotes the correspondence of that King with Madame Geoffrin (Dussieux, "Les artistes Français à l'Étranger," p. 529). The total cost of the theatre at Bordeaux was 2,436,523 livres, 19 sous. Louis exceeded his estimates by 939,205 livres, 15 sous, 7 deniers, and the Jurats at Bordeaux declined to pay his fees on this amount. Louis also designed the Galleries of the Palais Royal, the Théâtre Français, and the Opera house in the Place Louvois, Paris, now destroyed.

[2] The extremely ingenious construction of his entablature is shown in the Porte-feuille, fol. iv. Patte, in his "Essai sur l'Architecture Théâtrale," 1782, described the theatre at Bordeaux as "le plus magnifique de tous les théâtres modernes." Arthur Young, who saw it in 1787, said it was the finest in France. Louis' Theatre still shows that it is possible to design a theatre without outraging architecture at nearly every possible point.

born in 1730, won the Grand Prix in 1751, and went to Rome in 1753. His younger brother, Antoine François, called Peyre le Jeune, born in 1739, won the Grand Prix in 1762, and went to Rome the following year. Chalgrin, who was born in 1739, also won the Grand Prix, and Gondouin, born in 1737, won it in 1758, and no doubt went to Rome. He certainly went there in 1775,[1] when he was half way through with the building of the École de Médecine. Antoine, born in 1733, designed the Hôtel de la Monnaie in 1768, and only visited Italy after its completion in 1777. But in one way or another each of these men took his inspiration from Italy, and Italy no longer meant the great architects of the Renaissance who had been accepted as undisputed masters by the elder generation; it meant the Temples of Rome or Magna Graecia, and the resuscitation of the actual standpoint of the architects of Imperial Rome in so far as the archaeologists could arrive at it. There was thus a wide gulf fixed between these men and such men as Ange Jacques Gabriel, who was indifferent to Italy and the Antiques, and relied on his own great abilities and the national tradition of his country. With the Revolution, the split became definite and final. Classic art and a peculiarly dismal version of it, was sanctified as the only expression of the somewhat blatant virtues of the Revolution, and for over thirty years Quatremère de Quincy was able to dominate French art and compel it to his own dogmatic theories. In his various official capacities, and later as perpetual Secretary of the restored Academy, he took very good care that none but artists trained in the School at Rome should be employed on any official work. It was on his inspiration that the Comte de Chabrol, Prefect of the Seine, laid it down as a principle, "que je ne m'occuperais que de jeunes artistes révenus de l'École de Rome." De Quincy himself drafted the programme for all such works, and insisted on their being strictly followed by the artists, most of whom were nominated by himself.

A folio volume, published in 1795, "An iv de la République Française une et indivisible," entitled "Œuvres d'Architecture de Marie Joseph Peyre, ancien pensionaire de l'Académie à Rome,"[2] shows the new movement in full blast. The Editor in a notice of the life of his father asks, "dans quel siècle depuis les anciens, cet art a-t-il été porté à un plus haut degré de perfection? L'Ecole de Chirurgie,[3] le

[1] "Nouv. Arch. de l'Art franc.," vi, 45. Leave granted to Gondouin as an "architecte de S.M.," to absent himself from France for a year to travel in Italy.

[2] Marie Joseph Peyre died 1785. The book was issued by his son.

[3] Gondouin.

Panthéon Français,[1] la Monnaie,[2] la Salle de Francais,[3] le goût actuel des jeunes artistes, sont aussi éloignés de l'architecture du commencement de ce siècle, que cette dernière de l'architecture Gothique." There was no question with these enthusiasts of grafting the new on to the old. They consciously and deliberately parted company with the art of their fathers, and turned their backs on the admirable achievements of the sculptors, painters, and architects of Louis XIV and Louis XV. Henceforward it was to be nothing but the antique—the antique, that is, of Paestum. Architecture was no longer to be a living art, but the slave and mouthpiece of archaeology.

In a way Peyre was reasonable enough. He insisted on the essential qualities of architecture, "les belles proportions et les belles masses" rather than "la grande richesse." "Les innovations sont dangereuses, et l'architecture ne doit pas être une affaire de mode." But when it came to practice, the architect was to be bound hand and foot to the literal practice of the ancients. If there were waterworks to be built, they should take the character of a Temple of Neptune; if an arsenal, of a Temple of Mars; if the theatre at the School of Medicine, of the Temple of Aesculapius; and all Peyre's own designs, some of them on a colossal scale, were based on the combination of existing fragments of Roman architecture. The inspiration and much of the detail are the same as that of Robert Adam in many of his interiors; in fact, both in France and England the course of architecture was running downhill on almost exactly parallel lines, and the last trace of the breadth and stateliness, one might almost call it the gallantry, of the older French tradition vanished under the arid touch of Percier and Fontaine.

The backbone of this group of renegades was Quatremère de Quincy, not an architect, scarcely to be reckoned an artist at all,[4] but a man of obstinate determination, of considerable ability as an administrator and controversialist, an archaeologist of much repute, and one of the most ferocious and dogmatic pedants that has ever lived. That he was sincere in his convictions, and genuinely anxious to further art, one

[1] Soufflot; altered and injured under de Quincy's direction.

[2] Antoine.

[3] The Odéon; Marie Joseph Peyre and Charles de Wailly.

[4] M. Schneider ("Quatremère de Quincy," p. 2), says that he had entered the studio of Guillaume Coustou in 1772, that is, Guillaume Coustou le fils, son of the younger of the two Coustous who died in 1746. Apparently de Quincy could draw enough to indicate his intentions to the artists under his direction, and that was about all. The illustrations to his "Histoire des plus célèbres Architectes" are by another hand.

may admit, but he was inconceivably narrow in his views, and not above the most flagrant jobbery in order to advance them. For this his official position gave him great opportunities. He was political representative of the Arts in 1791, and in this capacity got himself made Director-General of the works at the Panthéon. He allied himself with David the Painter in the attack on the old Academies, "la Bastille Académique." He was unable to regain the favour of Napoleon,[1] but on the return of the Bourbons he was appointed perpetual Secretary of the Académie des Beaux Arts, and held this post till 1830. Throughout those years he was consulted on all schemes for the improvement of Paris, and was practically Director of the Arts. He surrounded himself with a clique of admirers, all of them "disciples pieux de l'architecture Classique, grècque ou grèco-romaine, tous passionnés pour les ordres, la plupart élèves des Ecoles que l'Académie a sous sa tutelle."[2] So for some fifteen years Quatremère de Quincy put the finishing touches to the havoc of the arts which his interference with them had begun forty years before. He had set up false idols in architecture—the dismal classic of the end of the eighteenth century is witness—he had ruined the sculpture of France with his laborious allegory and want of critical insight, he reprobated the art of Houdon and Pajou, and found his ideal sculptor in Canova. Lastly he had set up the standard of that false archaeology which has ever since been a most dangerous pitfall of young French architects, "plus préoccupé de restituer à science les monumens qu'elle a perdus que d'interpréter ceux qu'elle a recouvrés." The patient study of facts was not at all his conception of archaeology. Dogmatism so arbitrary and oppressive was bound to produce a vigorous reaction. The artists revolted in 1830, and de Quincy, old, obstinate, and indomitable,[3] had to endure the bitterness of seeing all his cherished theories trampled underfoot by the Romantics.

Since those days architecture has wandered first in one direction, then in another, and if Quatremère de Quincy could return to-day he might believe that he had succeeded after all, for the latest revival has been that of the ponderous classic that he loved, and the latest official theory of the control and administration of the arts is, that they should on

[1] Napoleon never forgave Quatremère de Quincy for severely criticizing his wholesale plunder of the galleries of Italy.

[2] "Quatremère de Quincy," by R. Schneider, p. 367, a rather difficult but valuable study of the art of the French Revolution and the Empire.

[3] He lived to extreme old age, dying in 1849, at the age of ninety-four.

no account be entrusted to creative artists, and that the proper persons to direct the arts are persons who have no first-hand acquaintance with the arts at all. Over a hundred and fifty years ago, Winckelmann, and after him Quatremère de Quincy, had insisted that it was essential not to leave the control in the hands of the "gens de métier." Yet the student of history can show that the reign of the virtuoso ends again and again in chaos. The true purpose and function of the arts will never be understood when interpreted by pedants such as the Comte de Caylus and Quatremère de Quincy. In France as in England a great national tradition was killed by the doctrinaires. It will only be built up again by the devoted labours of artists themselves.

QVOD ERIT QVE FVIT QVE EST QVE FACIET
Tout ce que le Passé cache en ses replis sombres
Tout ce que le Present produit de toutes parts
Tout ce que l'Avenir couure encor de ses ombres
En découuert par mes regards.

APPENDIX

Soufflot and the Dome of the Panthéon

IN the British Museum there is a collection of pamphlets dealing with the controversy of the dome of the Panthéon. Among the writers were Gauthey, Rondelet, Viel, Vaudoyer, Labanc, De Lagardette, De Wailly, Peyre, De Gisors, Radel, Giraud, and the inevitable Quatremère de Quincy. The original plans prepared by Soufflot were submitted to the King by Marigny in 1757. Patte, who had criticized the plan from the first, issued a memoir in 1770 pointing out that the supports were inadequate, and that a wall 24 feet high and 3 feet 6 inches thick had been provided to carry a wall 8 feet thick and 40 feet high. This wall, he said, should have been at least 9 feet thick, and he referred to the plans of S. Peter's, S. Paul's, the Val de Grâce, and the Sorbonne. Soufflot, confident in the support of Marigny, "brava l'opinion publique," and was allowed to proceed on his assurance that he had his own secret of construction, which it appeared later was a free use of iron ties and cramps. When, however, after the death of Soufflot, the piers of the dome were level with the vaults of the nave, the stones of the piers began to flush. It was explained that this was due to bad masonry, the beds of the stones having only been worked level for a few inches back from the face, and it was sought to remedy this by sawing between the joints in order to distribute the pressure over a wider area. Soufflot was dead, but notwithstanding this ominous sign, the Government ordered his designs to be followed exactly, with the result that when some years later the centres were struck, the failure was so obvious that in 1796 a commission was appointed to investigate the whole matter. The commission produced a report which Patte stigmatizes as "insignifiant," though it was signed by Chalgrin, Peyre, Rondelet, and others. Finally, in 1806, the work of securing and completing the fabric was entrusted to Rondelet, who increased the area of the piers carrying the dome by adding to their outer sides, and casing in the engaged columns with pilasters. The outer sides of the piers now measure 20 feet 6 inches (measured by Mr. W. F. Knight) as against 18 feet out to out of columns of Soufflot's piers.

Fergusson's account of the affair is inaccurate. The dome was not completed in 1779, as he says; it was not even begun till some years after that date. Fergusson also makes one of his peculiarly unhappy suggestions that the whole thing might have been avoided if Soufflot had set his piers back to the angles of the outer walls, and the dome increased "to a little over 100 feet"; this would, in fact, have increased the diameter of the dome to nearly 120 feet, and could not have been carried out without re-casting the entire design. Britton and Pugin ("Public Buildings of London," i, 20-21) say that of a total area of 84,025 feet super in S. Paul's, 14,311 feet is occupied by points of support, whereas out of a total of 60,287 at the Panthéon, 9,269 feet are so occupied. Soufflot seems to have relied on his columns as taking a part of the weight of his dome, and to have calculated on the weight being distributed over points of support which it did not in fact ever reach. His work showed a failure in scientific imagination unusual in French architecture.

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